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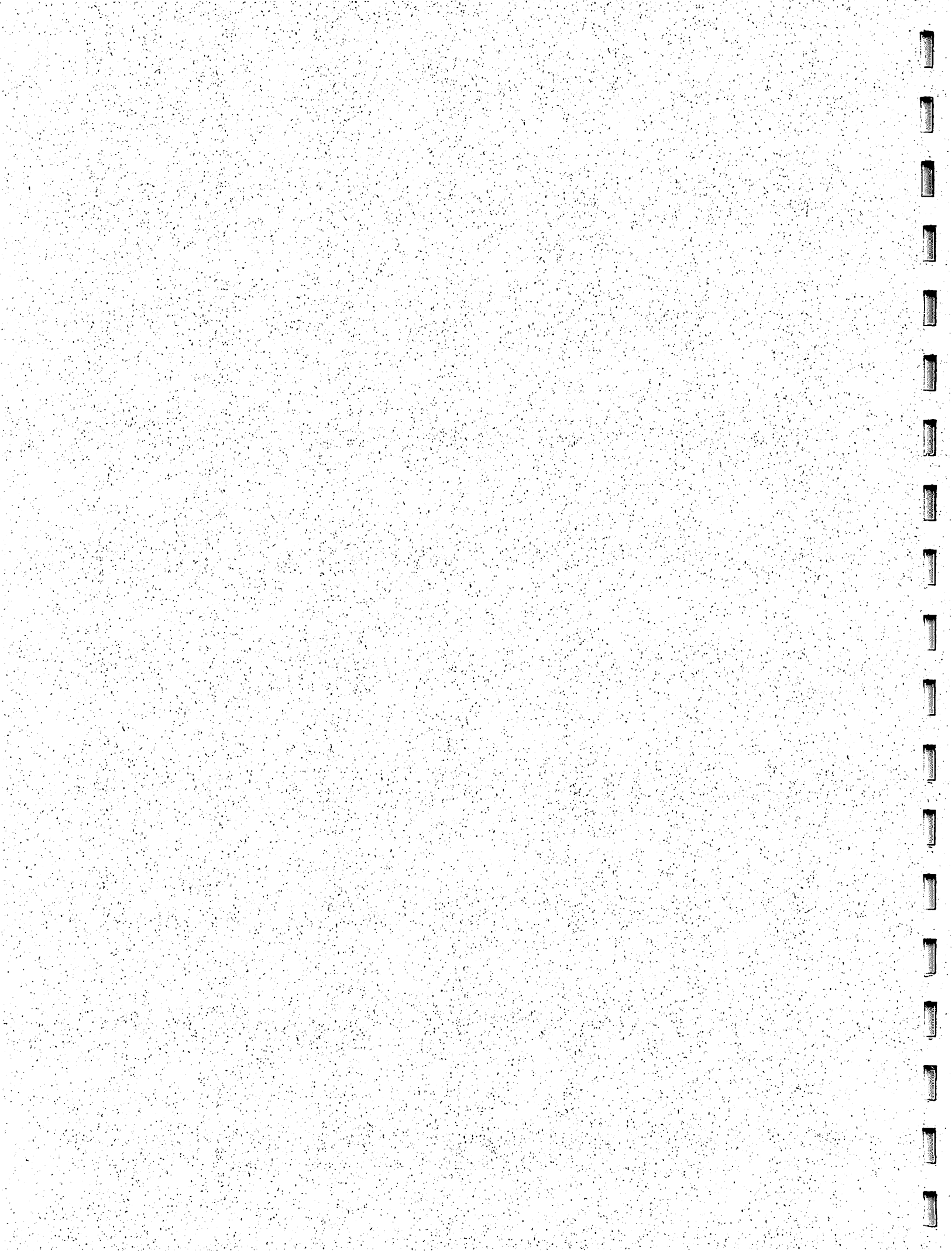
C U R A T O R I A L R E P O R T N U M B E R 8 3

Needle Arts
in Nova Scotian Women's Lives:
1752-1938

by Jo-Ann Citrigno

A FAMILY *of* 25 MUSEUMS


NOVA SCOTIA
Education and Culture



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Needle Arts in Nova Scotian Women's Lives: 1752-1938

Researched and Written by Jo-Ann Citrigno
Edited by Jennifer Lambert

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Museum Services Division
Nova Scotia Museum
Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture

C U R A T O R I A L R E P O R T S

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FOREWORD

This report was researched and written over nine weeks, in conjunction with planning three traveling exhibits and audiotapes. It is a preliminary study only of an area that has great potential for future research and interpretation. Any analysis suggested by this report is tentative; further study of needlework practises in Nova Scotia is needed to validate or discredit the historical implications suggested here.

This introductory survey of needle arts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is based primarily on secondary sources, diaries of Nova Scotian women, and a very superficial assessment of period newspapers, ladies' books, magazines, and manuals. Much of the data regarding women's needlework reflects larger patterns in New England and England, as communicated by secondary sources, while the regional diaries and newspapers confirm certain trends and place the isolated facts within the context of the lives of Nova Scotian girls and women.

Women were responsible for the vast majority of domestic needlework, which helped to inform perceptions of women and their work. While the crux of this report focuses on women's domestic arts, needlework was also done by men. Fishermen made nets, sailors repaired sails as well as their personal belongings, and many tailors and cobblers were male. There were other men who practised needlework for pleasure, as illustrated by certain artifacts in the Nova Scotia Museum collection. This is an intriguing area for further research; a possible starting point would be to speak with staff at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, and the Fisheries Museum.

The bibliography appended to the report includes both cited works and sources that appeared to be of interest or use. Where possible, I have indicated access locations, including the Nova Scotia Museum library, Halifax County Regional Library system, Killam (Dalhousie), NSCAD (Nova Scotia College of Art

and Design), or MSVU (Mount Saint Vincent University) libraries.

This report is complemented by files that contain notes on diaries, photocopies of newspapers, illustrated subject files, and the script for the audiotapes. The audiotapes contain selections from diaries of Nova Scotian girls and women. The three traveling exhibits are going to different sites during the summer of 1997, but will be available in the fall.

I strongly encourage interpreters and guides to look at those ladies' books and magazines which focus on needlework. Many of them have been reprinted and are available through the NSM or public library. They give one a feeling for the period that secondary literature cannot match, and if you are at all interested in sewing, knitting, crocheting, or embroidery, it might be fun to follow a given pattern, using historically accurate colours. I very much enjoyed this research project, and hope this report helps others to gain an appreciation of needle art.

Jo-Ann Citrigno

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PLAIN SEWING

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the majority of women's needlework was devoted to the making and mending of clothes and household linens. All clothes were hand-sewed, and most women made their own family's garments and linen goods. Wealthier households often paid a professional tailor or seamstress to make, or 'cut out,' at least some of their clothing. The patenting of a sewing machine in Connecticut in the 1840's eventually transformed the production of clothing, but it was a gradual process, affecting increasing numbers of people throughout the nineteenth century. By the end of the century, the majority of households either had access to a sewing machine, or were buying more and more ready-made or manufactured clothing.

The art of 'plain sewing' formed the core of every girl's domestic education. Plain sewing ranged from simple tasks such as hemming, seaming, and making buttonholes, to cutting out new garments and remaking old ones. It also included mending, patching, and darning. Underclothes, caps, bags, pockets, handkerchiefs, aprons, and men's shirts were all considered plain sewing. Clothing for infants and young children was also homemade. Plain sewing including making household linens such as sheets, pillow slips, bed coverings, towels, and table mats.¹

Marking household linens with initials, or names, and numbers for inventory purposes, was learned early on. Marking was either embroidered, or (later on) inked on to linens using special marking inks. Marking embroidery, usually cross-stitch, was the first kind of embroidery a girl would learn.

¹ Margaret Vincent, *The Ladies' Work Table: Domestic Needlework in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: University Press of New England, 1988) 3.

Knitting was also considered plain sewing. Young children, boys as well as girls, were taught basic stitches. Stockings and mittens were always needed, and children, especially girls, often had knitting and plain-sewing tasks to complete before they could play.

It is likely that even wealthy women did some plain sewing. A well-to-do woman might have had to teach her servants to sew and at least would have to supervise their work. A 1792 issue of the Philadelphia magazine, *The Lady's Pocket Library*, included an article on manners, advised her readership that, "All kinds of plain work, though no very polite accomplishment, you must be so well versed in as to be able to cut out, make and mend your own linen."² And in *The Young Lady's Friend*, first published in 1838, Eliza Farrar claimed that a "woman who does not know how to sew is as deficient in her education as a man who cannot write. Let her condition in life be what it may, she cannot be ignorant of the use of her needle."³

Sewing and the Education of Young Girls

While plain sewing, marking, and knitting were all considered fundamental components of female education at the end of the eighteenth century, most young girls would have learned these skills at home, taught by their mother or elder sisters. Young women in service may also have been instructed by their employers. However, those who could afford it sent their daughters to academies for young ladies, or to sewing schools, many of which were advertised in Halifax newspapers. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the emphasis on needlework instruction

² Susan Burrows Swan, *Plain and Fancy: American Women and their Needlework, 1650 - 1850* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977) 39.

³ Eliza Ware Rothic Farrar, *The Young Lady's Friend: By a Lady* (Boston: American Stationers' Co.; John B. Russell, 1873) 122. Cited in Swan, 40.

declined, as girls were encouraged to study academic subjects at public schools. It is likely that most girls continued to learn needlework skills at home, while some may have learned basic sewing at school as well.

As the century progressed, basic sewing knowledge was easily supplemented by the many guides and magazines that became increasingly available. Ironically, at the same time, technology enabled more women to cease sewing for themselves. One can trace the progression from the elaborate crewel and silk embroidery, which was the prerogative of the wealthy at the beginning of the 1800's, to the perforated Berlin work and outline embroidery that was accessible to everyone by the end of the century. As fancy needlework became a universal pastime, the level of necessary technical skill decreased dramatically.

There are numerous advertisements in New England newspapers for needlework instruction. Teaching needlework was a socially acceptable means for a widow or unmarried woman to support herself. In the *New York Mercury*, in 1765, Mrs. Carrol announced that she "proposes teaching young ladies plain work, Samplers, French Quilting, knoting for Bed Quilts or Toilets, Dresden, flowering on Cat Gut, Shading (with Silk or Worsted on Cambrick, Lawn or Holland)."⁴

According to Ethel Stanwood Bolton and Eva Johnston Coe, between 1706 and 1833 there were 127 female academies or finishing schools in 15 states.⁵ Aside from needlework, academies would teach girls the art of the curtsy, basic deportment, table arrangement, reading, mathematics, geography, painting and music.

Anna Green Winslow was born in Nova Scotia, but later sent to live with her aunt in Boston. She was taught separately by a sewing mistress and a

⁴ *New York Mercury*, 6 May 1765. Cited in Rita Susswein Gottesman, *The Arts and Crafts of New York 1726 - 1776* (New York: Historical Society, 1938) 276.

⁵ Cited in Bath, 158.

writing master. It was not unusual for girls to attend lessons with different instructors, particularly if they were being educated individually.

The following women advertised needlework instruction in Halifax during this period: Hannah Hutchinson (1752); Mrs. Blackburn (1774); Mrs. Cottman (1777); Deborah Clark (1784); Mrs. Bosworth (1787); Mrs. Fitzgerald (1809); and Mrs. Charles Roth and Mrs. Falls (1829).

Hannah Hutchinson offered lessons in all sorts of needlework and embroidery, using cruels, gold, or silver, as well as French and Country dances.⁶ Mrs. Blackburn taught sewing, knitting, flowering, marking, and "mitts knitting."⁷ Both Rebecca Byles and Anna Kearny refer to Mrs. Cottnam in their letters or diaries. Rebecca wrote to her aunt on 8 November, 1777:

*Mrs. Cottnam is in Town at the Head of a Female Academy.
My sisters and myself go to her, they to plain sewing &
Reading, & I to Writing, learning French (parley vous
Francais Mademoiselle) and Dancing, which employs good
Part of my Time.⁸*

Anna Kearny also refers to her daughter returning to school at Mrs. Cottnam's and thought about sending all three of her children to school in 1802 at the cost of one dollar per month per child.⁹

Mrs. Bosworth ran a school "teaching young Ladies Reading and all sorts of needlework."¹⁰ Deborah Clark, Mrs. Charles Ross, and Mrs. Falls were all named as needlework instructors and quoted by Deborah A. Young in *A Record for Time*.¹¹

⁶ *Halifax Gazette*, 18 April 1752.

⁷ [*Nova Scotia Gazette*], 23 August 1774. PANS Reel 8155. Cited in Faith Wallace, "Riggings of Fashions: A Glimpse of Clothing and the Fashionable Ideal in 18th Century Halifax".

⁸ Conrad et al, 48.

⁹ Diary of Anna Kearney. Cited in Wallace.

¹⁰ 5 June 1787. PANS Reel 8154. Cited in Wallace.

¹¹ Deborah Young, *A Record for Time* (Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 1985) 8.

In 1809, in the *Weekly Chronicle*, Mrs. Fitzgerald announced to her friends and "the Public" that she intended commencing a school, in which she proposed the instruction of the following branches of "FEMALE EDUCATION, viz.:"

*The French Language, Geography, Painting, Drawing, Embroidering, Tambouring, Working upon Muslins, and plain Sewing, Marking, Reading, and English Grammar; a Master will also be provided to teach Writing and Arithmetic. -The utmost attention will be shewn, as well to the morals, as the improvement of such Pupils as may be intrusted to her care, and by exerting her best endeavours to give general satisfaction, she hopes to merit the patronage now solicited.*¹²

J. MacGregor toured British North America in the 1820s, after which he published his *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British America*. He wrote about "The Acadian School," founded in 1813 in Halifax, where pupils were taught according to the Lancasterian system. When Mr. MacGregor visited the school, two thousand students — boys and girls — had already passed through its doors. Regardless of their gender, pupils were taught reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, and geography. However, Mr. MacGregor was more interested in what he perceived to be the advantages of this particular school:

*Utility is the great object of instruction at this school: the girls are taught every kind of needle-work, and the arts of carding, spinning, knitting, and dressing wool and flax.*¹³

After 1830, girls received less needlework training, both at home and at school than their mothers or grandmothers were given. Schools and curricula changed with the result that girls were taught more of the humanities.¹⁴

In 1842, the *New Brunswick Courier* ran an advertisement for a seminary teacher, Misses MacKintosh, who taught "needlework, plain and

¹² *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 22 December 1809.

¹³ J. MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British America* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, & Green, 1828, reprint. S.R. Publishers Limited, Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968) 133.

¹⁴ Vincent, 11.

ornamental.”¹⁵ In 1854 there was a notice in the *Halifax Journal*, on behalf of the “Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, London [for items] about an Educational Exhibition.” Needlework samples were listed among other articles desired for exhibit.¹⁶

In 1856 the Amherst Female Seminary distributed a flyer, advertising nine academic subjects and embroidery. Music, Drawing, French, and Italian were also offered, for an additional charge. Boarding, washing (white dresses excepted), and ten subjects cost “30 pounds per Academical Year.” The young ladies were promised proper exercise, including the use of a quiet saddle horse, and parents were assured that Amherst is a remarkably healthy part of the country.¹⁷ Amherst also boasted Miss Wiswall’s Female Academy, which was advertised in 1856 by invitation cards. Miss Wiswall offered academic subjects as well as needlework.¹⁸

In 1861, Mrs. Dillon of Charlottetown placed an advertisement in the *PEI Examiner*, offering instruction in French embroidery and other fancy work, at either day or evening school in Charlottetown.¹⁹ And in Liverpool in 1874, Mrs. McConney proposed to teach chart-cutting.²⁰

Plain Sewing and Nova Scotian Diaries

There is much to be learned about plain sewing from the diaries of Nova Scotian girls and women. Many of these diaries record interesting details of their writers’ domestic tasks and pastimes, offering a tantalizing glimpse into the day-to-day lives

¹⁵ *New Brunswick Courier*, 31 December 1842.

¹⁶ *Halifax Journal*, 17 April 1854.

¹⁷ PANS RG 14:45F:9.

¹⁸ PANS RG 14:45F:4.

¹⁹ *PEI Examiner*, 18 February 1861.

²⁰ *Liverpool Advertiser*, 27 August 1874.

of generations of both urban and rural women. We discover that plain sewing was frequently more than just a necessary chore. Sewing could be a collaborative effort, as in uniting with neighbours or friends to make costumes for anticipated celebrations such as weddings or christenings, or helping to make mourning clothes for an unexpected funeral. Such events called for collaborative efforts, but sewing was also an opportunity to share patterns and pool knowledge, or simply to socialize with others. One might say that sewing was a means by which the fabric of a community was stitched together, piece by piece.

Anna Green Winslow was born in Cumberland, Nova Scotia, in 1759. Her father was one Joshua Winslow, a lieutenant in the British army. Appointed Commissary-General of the British forces at Fort Beausejour in 1755, he eventually took advantage of an offer of free land and settled in Cumberland. Anna's parents sent her to live with her Aunt Sarah Deming in Boston, where Anna began sewing lessons with a Mrs. Smith. In her diary, Anna describes making shifts, shirts (for her uncle), and mending gloves and handkerchiefs. Whether Anna usually enjoyed these tasks, or regarded them as a tiresome but necessary chore, on March 10, 1772, she seemed pleased to have "... finished my stent of sewing work for this day."²¹

Rebecca Byles was born in Massachusetts in 1762, but fled to Nova Scotia in 1776 with her family and other Loyalists. Her father was a Harvard graduate and Anglican priest, and became the chaplain at the Halifax garrison. Rebecca wrote letters to her aunt during the American War of Independence, from which we learn that she and her sisters attended a female academy, where they studied both academic subjects and plain sewing.²²

²¹ Alice Morse Earle, ed., *Anna Green Winslow: A Boston School Girl of 1771* (1894; reprint, Williamstown, Massachusetts: Corner House Publishers, 1974) 41.

²² Cited in Margaret Conrad, Toni Laidlaw, and Donna Smith, eds., *No Place Like Home* (Halifax: Formac Publishers, 1988) 48.

Anna Kearny was married to Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Kearny who, in 1802, was stationed with the 21st Nova Scotia Regiment in Sydney, Cape Breton. In her diary, Anna writes about mending her embroidered handkerchief, making a petticoat, and having her friend Charlotte mend her lace cap. Anna taught her self-named daughter to sew, but seems to have lacked conviction in either her skills or her perseverance: "Anna began working part of a Muslin jacket and Petticoat, which I foresee will never be finish'd."²³

Anna Green Winslow, Rebecca Byles, and Anna Kearny were wealthy, educated, urban women living at the turn of the nineteenth century. Louisa Collins was also educated, but she lived on a farm in Colin Grove, just outside Dartmouth. Louisa's rural existence informed many of her domestic duties, such as making butter and helping to harvest the hay. She was also the primary spinster in her family, which presumably meant that the burden of caring for her parents fell on her shoulders. But between these varied activities, she managed to find time to sew. In her diary, written at the age of eighteen, she notes days and afternoons spent sewing. She worked on trimming and altering frocks, making a spencer (small jacket), and sewing corsets. On October 14, 1815, her day sounds deceptively leisurely: "I have twisted a little yarn. And wrote some poetry, and mended old stockings. Papa has been to town. He brought me a note from Harriet, and my cloth for my pelisse."²⁴

Mary Ann Norris lived at Starr's Point in the Annapolis Valley. Her father was a minister, and the family was related to the Prescotts of Prescott House. Although her family was well connected and not without means, Mary Ann worked hard at domestic and farm chores. Her diary spans the years 1818 - 1839, from her late teens to thirties. She describes many sewing tasks, including making frocks,

²³ Diary of Anna Kearny (1802), PANS MG 1 N526A: 6,9.

²⁴ Dale McClare, ed., *Louisa's Diary* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum Publication, 1989) 30.

finishing comforters, helping neighbours to make gowns and attending sewing parties. Mary Ann's diary illustrates how sewing was often a collaborative effort, especially at significant events such as births, weddings, and funerals.

*May 31st - Mrs James was there and we both assisted her with a shroud.
June 1st - I made a grave cap for my dear friend Charlotte Campbell.
Finished about three o'clock and then walked up with it. But did not
return until after dark, finding they wished a little more assistance.²⁵*

Almira Bell was a school teacher in Barrington in the 1830s. In her diary she describes making a silk dress, and there are several passages referring to her penchant for large sleeves, which invites great teasing from her friends. Her repeated references to quilting parties punctuates the social aspect of sewing during this period, while Almira's mention of sewing mourning clothes for her friend, Mrs. Sargent, again expresses the cooperative nature of both the task and the times.²⁶

Edward Ross was a farmer, storekeeper, and, eventually, a Justice of the Peace. Although his work took him into Halifax a great deal, in his diary of 1833 - 1841, Edward writes mainly about life on the farm. While he himself does not appear to have sewn, his diary establishes that domestic sewing was not just women's work. There are a number of descriptions of his brother, George, making shoes. And on December 14, 1835, a John Reece came down to cut out the boys' jackets. Edward's entries with references to textile production on the farm reveal the degree to which such work was tied with social activity. He mentions a friend, Louisa, carding wool, and writes of neighbours coming by to break flax and take part in spinning frolics. And on July 31, 1837, he recorded: "After dinner, Rachael and I went over to Mary's and all three went up to visit Mrs. Hutt. Rachael and Mary cut

²⁵ Diary of Mary Ann Norris. PANS MG 1:729A.

²⁶ Diary of Almira Bell, Marion Robertson Collection. PANS MG 1:3622:4.

out and partly made a gown for the old Lady. She amused me with telling my fortune on cards."²⁷

The daughter of a shipbuilder, Annie Rogers Butler was born in Yarmouth in 1841. In 1879, she married a sea captain and one month later they set sail for South America. In her diary, Annie describes her life on board ship; even at sea her domestic duties included some plain sewing. She made pillow and sheet shams, cut out garments, and mended and patched old towels to save the good ones.²⁸

Hannah Richardson was born in 1844 in Carleton, Yarmouth County. She left Yarmouth in 1871 to work at the P.P. Sherry Shoe Factory in Lynn, Massachusetts. Hannah earned \$500 as a 'lady seamstress' working on a Singer sewing machine. She either enjoyed her work thoroughly, or did not earn enough to buy her clothes, for according to her diary, Hannah spent even her spare time sewing for herself and her brother and friends. She describes mending the neck on Joe's shirt, and finishing her wrapper. However, she did enjoy other hobbies, and on March 4, 1872, she writes: "in [the] evening Susie Walsh stitched my morning dress on the machine while I played for her on the flutina."²⁹

Mary MacDougall MacDonald was born in Hants County, but in 1873 she and her husband took the train to sunny California. She didn't wait long before beginning the business of stitching together a new life. Her diary describes how she unpacked her sewing machine soon after arriving in California. On the morning of September 12 she made a pair of sheets (which would have been a breeze compared to previously hand-hemming linen), and on September 15 she mended clothes and cut out an apron.³⁰

²⁷ Diary of Edward Ross, Nova Scotia Museum TS. PANS MG 1:794 - 795.

²⁸ Conrad et al, 138 - 149.

²⁹ Conrad et al, 154 - 160.

³⁰ Ibid.

In her old age, Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith lived with her daughter's family in Inverness County, Cape Breton. Her diary of 1890 - 1892 reveals a variety of collaborative domestic activities from spinning to using the sewing machine. Perhaps due to failing eyesight, Mary preferred knitting to sewing, but she writes about making a petticoat for one of the girls, mending Thomas's coat and fixing a cap for herself. She also mentions Sarah working away at her old black dress and Flora being busy fixing the girls' Ulsters. Mary also did patchwork, which the women quilted together. Their usual pattern of sewing and socializing is evident in the following diary entries, the first of which also indicates how sewing was a means by which women could contribute to the significant nineteenth-century practice of social charity, affecting lives far beyond their own communities.³¹

Sept. 17, 1891 Bella and Ethel up to Mrs. Baynes Sewing for the Trinidad mission and practicing singing. Maria Beaton came this morning to do the weaving.

May 17, 1892 Ellen came up to do a little sewing on the Machiene but she did not stop for tea.³²

When her husband went to the Yukon, Rebecca Chase Kinsman Ells ran the family farm in Port Williams, Kings County, with the help of her son, Manning, and some hired hands. Although her husband's absence extended her duties beyond the usual domestic parameters, Rebecca remained responsible for maintaining the household's clothing. In her diary of 1901, she describes taking her silk waist to Mrs. Burbridges to be mended, accompanying Lee, the hired hand, to choose a suit of clothes, buying blue serge for a skirt and Eton jacket and spending an entire day patching Manning's coat.³³

³¹ See below for the subheading "Sewing and Missionary Work." Also chapter heading "Themes for Needlework Interpretation."

³² Diary of Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith, Beaton Collection MG 12, 45, 6.

³³ Conrad et al.

Bessie Hall was born in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. As a 'modern' woman, her life is perhaps more recognizable than those of any of the diarists mentioned thus far. Bessie kept a diary while attending Dalhousie University, and again during the First World War, during which she served as a volunteer nurse. Despite her obviously busy lifestyle, Bessie always found time to do "her week's mending," and even made her own graduation dress.³⁴

Inga Vogler, of Vogler's Cove, Lunenburg County, was in seventh grade in 1916 when she first started to keep a diary. Inga practiced her plain-sewing skills by doing patchwork, hemming a mat for her doll house and making dolls' clothes after school with her friend, Mildred. However, although Inga's dolls had to suffer the indignities of her sewing, Inga's mother ordered her daughter's dresses ready-made:

Thurs June 1, 1916

I came home after my class in the afternoon to look at Mr. Heckman's goods. After supper I went over and he had the girl's dresses out then. Mamma ordered me a pink one which is all shirred around the waist, and a tan one with white collar and cuffs and red silk -- the belt and neck, and a gray one trimmed in plaid and three middies.³⁵

Laura Kaulback Slauenwhite became a housekeeper after her husband died and her second son had difficulties finding a job. From her diary, kept from 1936 - 1938, while she was employed as a housekeeper in New Germany, Nova Scotia, we learn that Laura regularly received hand-me-downs from her (larger) friend Eileen, in Montreal. She writes about making over Eileen's wool suit for herself. Laura's housekeeping responsibilities included mending for her employer, and she made a little extra money by sewing for neighbours and friends. Between March 8 and March 14, she "was up to Roys K working at Freelove's

³⁴ Conrad et al.

³⁵ Diary of Inga Vogler. PANS MG 100:92:27.

dress," and "finished Freelove's dress last week took it up to her and she was pleased and gave me \$1.00 for making it for her."³⁶

Sewing and Missionary Work

The link between sewing and missionary work manifested itself in Nova Scotia in two ways. The first was the sewing and quilting women and girls contributed to foreign missions, and the second was the dissemination overseas of sewing skills valued by the West. In *Old Nova Scotian Quilts*, Scott Robson and Sharon MacDonald quote an article from the *Missionary Register* in 1852, which describes the *Juvenile Society of the Missionary Society* in Dayspring, Lunenburg County:

Thirty girls, aged nine to thirteen years, were busy raising money for supplies to send to girls' schools in missionary stations. Among the list of articles being sent were "patchwork, needles, thread, scissors, thimbles."³⁷

And, Charlotte Geddie, a Pictou Presbyterian missionary in the New Hebrides, in the South Pacific, wrote in 1853 that "Patchwork, or rather pieces to make patchwork, are very useful to teach little girls to sew."³⁸ Those sewing skills a girl was taught at home would be reinforced when utilized by missions, or youth organizations such as the 4-H Club and Junior Red Cross.

In 1937, Laura Kaulback Slauenwhite wrote about learning textile crafts through the Women's Institute, and Guild meetings. At a Women's Institute meeting she was taught weaving, using cardboard forms to make caps, bags, belts,

³⁶ Conrad et al, 181 - 196.

³⁷ Scott Robson and Sharon MacDonald, *Old Nova Scotian Quilts* (Halifax: Nimbus and the Nova Scotia Museum, 1995) 20.

³⁸ Ibid.

and scarves while she learned to knit a cover for a hot water bag at a Guild meeting.³⁹

³⁹ Conrad et al, 289 and 296.

EMBROIDERY

Functional embroidery, for the purpose of marking clothes and household linens, was considered to be plain sewing. However, fancy or decorative needlework was mostly the divertissement of middle- and upper-class women. Working-class women were less likely to have the time or money for anything but essential needlework, and the simple, but necessary, skills would usually be learned at one's mother's knee, and practiced on school-girl samplers. Girls and women of wealthy families would be taught embroidery techniques and stitches from skilled needleworkers. Decorative linens and garments were symbols of prestige and, therefore, fancy needlework was considered an appropriate occupation for women of leisure.

Embroidery styles and techniques came in and out of fashion: crewel or surface embroidery, canvas, muslin, and tambour work were almost always used for decorating household goods and items of clothing. Canvas work became a pastime practiced by more women once Berlin patterns were introduced in the 1820s and 30s, making it possible for women with little needlework training to produce satisfying projects at a range of expense.

By the later nineteenth century, many more embroidery skills were accessible through "Ladies" books and magazines that gave instructions for various types of needlework, including embroidery. They provided patterns for monograms, names and line motifs. Outline embroidery became the rage at the end of the century, and it was possible to buy stamped linen and transfer patterns. Outline embroidery was much faster than filling in the pattern and it required fewer stitches to accomplish.

Samplers

Samplers were originally worked by women as a kind of record book of the stitches and patterns they accomplished over the years. They were embroidered on long, narrow pieces of cloth that were rolled up between use. By the turn of the nineteenth century, "school-girl" samplers were square, often framed and displayed as "emblematic of the accomplished young ladies they were becoming."⁴⁰ Sewing samplers was part of a girl's early education. Their primary function was didactic, to teach her a number of different stitches, ensuring that she could embroider letters and numbers for the purpose of marking her future household's clothes and linen for inventory. Middle- and upper-class girls made samplers as an introduction to fancy embroidery. A basic sampler was often simply the alphabet in cross-stitch, while a decorative sampler showed off a variety of stitches, and might include pictorial elements and verses.

Writing, in contrast to reading, was considered a job-related skill that society only required of boys ... Finally, in 1771, the legislation was changed once again ... females, reading, writing ... The job-related skill that corresponded, for girls, to what writing was for boys, was needlework. (Girls in fact formed their letters in thread in their sampler.)⁴¹

But samplers were more than a backdrop for displaying an ability to read and stitch letters. Sampler verses illustrated a girl's knowledge of literature or, more commonly, religious and moral sentiments. Susan Burrows Swan claims that samplers were a:

virtual catalog of ideals that females cherished, show[ing] us the character traits that these girls were supposed to exhibit. There are odes to virtue, humility, selflessness, cheerfulness, and industry;

⁴⁰ Swan, *Plain and Fancy*, 52.

⁴¹ E. Jennifer Monaghan, "Literacy in Eighteenth-Century New England: Some Historiographical Reflections on Issues of Gender," in *Making Adjustments* (Pub. Info) 31.

*dire warnings against the corresponding evils, an ever-present preoccupation with death.*⁴²

The following sampler verses from the Nova Scotia Museum collection corroborate Swan's claims:

*Lord give us grace our time to spend
In virtues Prudent way
That when our mortal lives shall end
No guilts may us dismay
Behold the saviour of mankind
Nailed to the shameful tree
How vast the Love that him inclin'd
To bleed and die for thee*

*Maria Grainger, 11 years old, 1788*⁴³

*Prostrate my contrite heart I Bend my God
My Father and my friend
Do not forsake me in my end
Love the Lord and he will be tender
Father unto thee*

*Ann Marvin, 1805*⁴⁴

*Mark Maria how the roses
Emulate thy damask cheek
How the buds their sweets discloses
And with op'ning bloom bespeak
But dear girl both flowers & beauty
Blossom fade and die away
Then pursue good sense and duty
Evergreen without decay*

*Maria Jane Woodward, 8 years old, 1820*⁴⁵

*How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour
And gather honey every day
From ev'ry op'ning flow'r
In works o'labour and of skill
I would be busy too
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do*

⁴² *Plain and Fancy*, 55.

⁴³ NSM accession.

⁴⁴ NSM accession 75.18.1, Picture Storage.

⁴⁵ NSM accession.

*In books or works for healthful play
Let my first years be past
That I may give for ev'ry day
Some good account at last.*

Elisa... 1820s⁴⁶

*National School/ Next unto God Dear Parents I address/
Myself to you in humble thankfulness/ For all your
care and charge on me bestowed/ The means of learning
unto me allowed.*

Charlotte Marvin, 1835⁴⁷

*Short is our longest day of life
And soon its prospect ends
Yet on that day's uncertain date
Eternity depends
But equal to our being's aim
The space to virtue giv'n
And ev'ry minute well improv'd
Secures an age in Heaven*

Marion D. Gray, Aged 13, 1841⁴⁸

*On the Death of a little Brother
How clay cold now these once warm lips
Which mine so oft have prest
And silent is that prattling tongue
In everlasting rest*

Isabella Heseltine Askrigg, Aged 12, 1851⁴⁹

*"Tho'Distant Seas between us Rear/and Distant be our lot/
yet oh if we should meet no more/ sweet friend forget me
not"*

Worked by Margaret Teresa Kelly, 1853⁵⁰

Samplers were not only for the display of verse. There are examples of samplers stitched with maps and even genealogical tables. Prescott House has a sampler worked in a map of Great Britain. In 1859, Mary Hilton stitched a rather maudlin sampler listing family deaths. She lists seven family members who died within

⁴⁶ NSM accession.
⁴⁷ NSM accession 75.18.2, Textile Storage.
⁴⁸ NSM accession.
⁴⁹ NSM accession.
⁵⁰ NSM accession 94.12.1, Picture Storage.

twenty years: her father, two brothers who died at sea, and four other siblings who died young.⁵¹

Pictorial Needlework

Once they demonstrated proficiency in stitching, girls would progress from samplers to more sophisticated needlework projects on canvas or silk, using wool, cotton, or silk thread. Crewel embroidery refers to the type of wool (worsted yarn) employed, but it is often used to describe a style of pictorial embroidery. Virginia Bath prefers the term “surface embroidery” to describe this needlework, which follows a design on the surface of the cloth, instead of incorporating the warp and weft of the cloth as in canvas work.⁵² Crewel work properly refers to only that embroidery worked in wool, thus excluding silk or cotton pictorial embroideries.

Crewel embroidery decorated the household linens and personal garments, including bed curtains, spreads, upholstery, cushions, petticoat borders, pockets, pocketbooks, and blankets.⁵³ Late-eighteenth-century crewel work is often distinctly Jacobean in style, incorporating stylized birds, animals, insects, flowers, and other vegetation. Crewel embroidery from this period is also distinguished by its use of ‘shading,’ a technique of blending polychromatic tints of a single colour. Wools were dyed using vegetable pigments, and common colours included shades of blue, green, red, orange, yellow, and brown. Shading was among the skills taught to young ladies at their needlework classes.

⁵¹ NSM accessions.

⁵² Virginia Bath, *Needlework in America* (New York: Viking Press, 1979) 77.

⁵³ Mary London and Susan Burrows Swan, *American Crewelwork* (New York: MacMillan, 1970) 85 - 86. See also Bath, 88 - 112.

Embroidery with silks was similar to crewel work, using related stitches and creating comparable effects. Favourite shades for silk embroidery were blue, green, pale yellow, pink, crimson, and black.⁵⁴ Because they had to be imported, silks were more expensive than wools, so presumably these were more commonly used by either wealthier women, or at least by those who displayed particular skill in crewel work.

Pictorial images, for these embroideries included pastoral scenes, still lifes, and mourning portraits. As with styles and techniques, embroidery images came in and out of vogue and were disseminated widely through needlepoint teachers and their students. "The Fishing Lady at Boston Common" was reproduced by many young girls in New England. Flowers and birds were always popular subjects for still lifes. Mourning portraits were very fashionable in early-nineteenth-century Nova Scotia, perhaps inspired indirectly by the death of George Washington in 1799, which moved many American women to embroider his likeness in remembrance.⁵⁵ However, most mourning pictures were of family members. They are very stylized portraits with heavy Greek or Roman references. The subjects wear classical garb and hairstyles. These memorial pictures were usually worked in silk on silk, although some women embroidered with the hair of their deceased loved one. The Nova Scotia Museum has an excellent example of a mourning picture.

Tambour embroidery, which originated in France, was introduced in Nova Scotia in the eighteenth century. Tambour work resembles chain-stitch embroidery, but requires the use of a drum-shaped embroidery hoop, for which it is named (as in tambourine). The tambour needle is actually a hook, used to pierce the cloth and draw the thread or crewel yarn through the back of the cloth in tiny

⁵⁴ Bath, 78.

⁵⁵ Bath, 163.

loops. The style of tambour, as well as the technique, appears to have enjoyed great popularity in Halifax; one finds frequent references to it in contemporary newspaper. White-on-white tambour work was manufactured by out workers in nineteenth-century England and Ireland. The introduction of machinery increased the availability and popularity of tambour-worked products which rendered it less profitable to employ embroidery workers.⁵⁶

White-on-white embroidery manifested itself in a specialty needlework called muslin, or white work. The lacelike effect created by embroidering white thread on white muslin (a delicate, woven cotton fabric) was further enhanced by filling in the spaces with drawn work or lace stitches. Designs tended towards stylized florals and scrolling. Collars, bonnets, fichus, aprons, and children's clothing were frequently decorated with white work. The most commonly white-worked article was the yard-square kerchief.⁵⁷

The white-on-white trend that marked the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries served practical as well as aesthetic needs. Garments and household linens were usually white, as undyed muslins and linen were readily available in many grades of quality and expense. Because dyes such as indigo had to be imported, white threads and yards were also more accessible.⁵⁸ It is probably safe to assume that the nineteenth-century purity movement, with its emphasis on cleanliness of mind and body, also promoted the popularity of white as the non-colour of choice.

⁵⁶ Sophia Frances Anne Caulfield and Blanche C. Seward, *The Dictionary of Needlework* (London, 1882, reprint. New York: Arno, 1972) 470.

⁵⁷ Bath, 305.

⁵⁸ Vincent, 22.

Berlin Work

Berlin Work was a contemporary term for embroidery employed with wool on canvas, now commonly ascribed to the genre of "needlepoint." Berlin work referred to a pattern and a type of wool, both of which were associated with the Germans. Virginia Bath gives us the provenance of Berlin Work:

In 1840 the Countess of Wilton edited Elizabeth Stone's The Art of Needlework, in it she stated that in 1804 or 1805 a Berlin print maker named Philipson had published the first patterns for canvas work in which the designs were coloured rather than coded. Madame Wittich, the wife of a Berlin merchant recognized the possibilities - on the whole less expensive than individually hand painted canvas.⁵⁹

Berlin patterns were easy to follow, as one had simply to correspond the squares of the canvas with the squares given on the pattern. Initially, patterns were hand-painted, so one was liberated even from the necessity of choosing thread colours. Later patterns were printed in colour, or, as in ladies' books such as *Godey's* or *Peterson's*, colour recommendations were included with the instructions. The simplicity of Berlin patterns enabled women without advanced needlework skills to do fancy or decorative needlework projects.

Berlin also described a new variety of merino wool that came into favour for canvas work in the 1820s and 30s. It was thought of as Berlin, or German, wool because the Germans were first to advance inexpensive dying techniques. They were also known as 'Zephyr' wools, after a popular trade label. The new merino wools were soft and took dyes well. In the late 1850s, aniline dyes produced colours in new shades, which appeared vibrant in comparison with the older, vegetable-dyed crewel wools. Some critics, then and now, would describe

⁵⁹ Bath, 203.

the aniline-created colours as harsh and vulgar, rather than vibrant. In any case, the new wools affected current tastes in needlework colours. Pastel shades were popular in the 1850s and 60s, to be usurped by Prussian blue a decade later. In the late 1880's, wine, maroon, olive green, brown and grey came into prominence.⁶⁰

The innovation of Berlin wool also forced changes in the type of ground canvas used. Initially, Berlin work was done on tabby woven linen or wool, using silk or fine woolen thread. The new merino wools were thicker, creating larger stitches, which required a coarser mesh and stronger canvas. Berlin canvas was evenly woven. 'Penelope' canvas, favoured by Berlin wool workers, had doubled warp and weft threads, which helped to strengthen the canvas and prevent it from warping.⁶¹ Manufacturers also adapted their canvas for Berlin work by introducing a coloured thread every tenth square, to aid the needleworker to count squares more easily and thus transfer the design more quickly.

Berlin work was used to decorate household objects from fire screens, chair seats, and footstools, to bellpulls and whatnots. Slippers, braces (suspenders), and bags of all sorts quickly became fair game for needleworkers. Patterns ranged from simple geometrics and florals, found in *Godey's* and *Peterson's*, to complex pictorial designs that were specially commissioned or self-created. Famous paintings, scenes from literature, history, or the Bible were all graphed for embroidery. As Virginia Bath points out, the seemingly endless possibilities offered by Berlin work frequently resulted in overly ambitious projects:

*Work was admired for the intricacy of its detail and the complexity of its shading. Unfortunately, because of the coarseness of the technique, human and animal portraits almost always became grotesque when translated into large square stitches.*⁶²

⁶⁰ Bath, 210.

⁶¹ *Plain and Fancy*, 205, and Bath, 208.

⁶² Bath, 206.

Beadwork could be incorporated into Berlin wool work, as either an accent to the wool, or as small objects worked entirely with beads. Beadwork was very popular in the nineteenth century, and was used on bags and purses, fire screens, and pictures. The high cost of imported beads limited their use to women of means, although with the repeal of the English glass tax in 1845, beads became cheaper and more easily accessible.⁶³

The use of perforated cardboard instead of the more expensive canvas was another innovation that popularized Berlin work. These projects were easy and inexpensive, suitable for children and women with few needlepoint skills. They ranged in size from monogrammed bookmarks to larger screens with maxims or verses, suitable for framing. Stiff paper or cardboard was perforated with evenly spaced holes. The embroiderer simply added diagonal- or cross-stitches between the holes. The board provided a painted background, saving wool (and, therefore, both money and time). The sturdy board did not require stretching, as was necessary with canvas grounds. The only drawback was the extra care needed to avoid ripping the paper, should one's needle be too thick for the holes provided.⁶⁴

Exclusivity goes a long way to defining taste, and in some circles the desirability of perforated Berlin work faded commensurately to its increasing popularity with the working classes:

Subject to the hierarchies of taste, however, perforated work was probably unknown in the finest of homes. In middle class homes, perforated work slipped from the parlor to the drawing room, and finally the work room and kitchen. Later, perforated work could be found in farmhouses but not town houses, boarding houses but not private residences.⁶⁵

⁶³ Bath, 219.

⁶⁴ Vincent, 37 - 39.

⁶⁵ Vincent, 81.

Art Needlework and Outline Embroidery

The Royal School of Art Needlework was founded in England in 1872, to provide "a lucrative and interesting career for women."⁶⁶ Inspired by antique embroideries, the school commissioned designs, often from leading artists, which were then worked by a corps of skilled embroideresses. The Royal School exhibited their works at Philadelphia's Centennial Exhibition, and received an overwhelming response, leading to the establishment of a needlework school in Philadelphia. Art needlework was espoused in England by noblewomen, churchmen and architects in an effort to promote excellence in design and to encourage the crafting of products that were more refined than Berlin work permitted.⁶⁷ In the United States, the pragmatic philosophy behind teaching women needlework skills clashed with certain opinions regarding the artistic standards of the designs taught, causing a splinter in the efforts to replicate the English movement. Needlework artists like Candace Wheeler, who, in 1921, published a book called *The Development of Embroidery in America*, chose to put their energies into designing new artistic works, and into creating the Society for Decorative Arts, in an effort to professionalize needlework and other women's crafts. Candace Wheeler organized the Society in order "to give practical direction to the art talent of the women of the country," and held classes, maintained a lending library, published a biweekly journal and opened a consignment needlework shop.⁶⁸ Outline work became the new style of embroidery. Similar to line drawing, outline work was valued for its simplicity, and for the speed with which it could be done. Outline work was considered suitable for white table and bed linens, table mats and cloths, and pillow

⁶⁶ London et al, 11.

⁶⁷ Bath, 36.

⁶⁸ Bath, 36 - 37.

shams. Kate Greenaway designs were very popular. Her first successful book, *Under the Window*, was published in 1878, featuring sweet and innocent children.⁶⁹ Mottoes done in outline work were usually appropriate to the utility of the object, ie., pillow shams might read 'Good Morning' and 'Good Night.' Outline work slogans tended to be coy, rather than religious.

Embroidery and Nova Scotia Women

Crewel, or surface embroidery, canvas, muslin, and tambour work, Berlin, and outline needlework were all fashionable in England and New England. It is certain that they would have enjoyed currency in Nova Scotia, too, but documentary evidence is lacking, so we are unable to comment on the specifics of who, when, why, and where. In terms of artifacts, the Nova Scotia Museum holds a few examples of crewel and surface embroideries. Some of these are firmly connected to a Nova Scotian family name or place, others arrived via New England. There are fine examples of Berlin canvas work, many of which can be seen at some of the historic house sites. Of course, the late-nineteenth-century styles are better represented than those from earlier in the period. The limited collection of artifacts does not preclude the probability that Nova Scotian women practiced certain needlework styles, it simply constrains us from making any descriptive claims. However, it is possible to indicate prevailing embroidery styles in places that were culturally similar to Nova Scotia, and the people who immigrated there.

Our Nova Scotia diarists make few specific references to embroidery. Anna Green Winslow and Rebecca Byles were both taught by needlework teachers who could have taught fancy embroidery. We know that Anna learned to knit lace

⁶⁹ Vincent, 73.

as well as three netting stitches, so it is probable that she was taught embroidery. Rebecca Byles writes that her sister Betsy was learning only plain sewing from Mrs. Cottnam in Halifax, although a year later she adds that Betsy was working a sampler. On January 15, 1802, Anna Kearny in Sydney, writes rather quixotically about mending her embroidered handkerchief:

Being all day mending my embroyder'd gold Handkerchief which now displays the depredations of time. The fine Colouring of the silk still defies his power. It is a piece of antiquity in all pro[bability].⁷⁰

Although she is mending the handkerchief rather than actually embroidering it, a woman of Anna Kearny's social standing would certainly have been likely to do some sort of embroidery.

Louisa Collins writes of "working some trimming," but not of embroidering. Of course, both Louisa's rural background and her farm and domestic responsibilities would likely preclude the possibility of her having time for decorative embroidery, nor is it plausible to assume that she received needlework lessons. Her textile chores included spinning, knitting, and making clothes. Her mention of "trimming" is the only exception to frequent references to plain sewing.

Mary Ann Norris writes of "sprigging Kate's veil," which could be a reference to embroidering net lace. Almira Bell mentions "braiding a little frock for Willy," which possibly refers to simply sewing decorative braid on the frock, as opposed to actual embroidery. In 1867, there were many advertisements for ladies' magazines, all of which offered illustrated braiding patterns. Braiding was popular at this time and Margaret Vincent asserts that the decorative effect was an expression of sympathy for soldiers in European conflicts such as the Crimean War (rather than the American Civil War).⁷¹

⁷⁰ Diary of Anna Kearny, 6.

⁷¹ Vincent, 51.

In 1852, Margaret Dickie Michener wrote in her diary that "Emily Ann [her niece?] has been taking lessons in fancy work yesterday and today." And Annie Rogers Butler's reference to making a pillow and sheet sham might suggest that she embroidered them, although it is just as likely that she left them plain.

Contemporary newspaper advertisements are a good source for research into cultural trends. A random sampling of East Coast papers, from 1752 to 1902, reveals that embroidery — and embroidered goods — were fashionable throughout the period. In 1785, "neat waistcoat pattern[s]" were on offer.⁷² The *Port Roseway Gazette* made special reference to tambour embroidery in an advertisement for edgings, lace and spangles.⁷³ Ready-made tamboured jaconets and tamboured waistcoats were for sale the following year.⁷⁴ Sewing silks, probably for embroidery use, were frequently advertised. Waistcoat patterns were advertised in 1812, as were tamboured muslin, tambour needles and cases.⁷⁵ In 1817, the *Acadian Recorder* ran an advertisement for "sampler canvas."⁷⁶

Embroidery teachers may have found employment through word-of-mouth, but they also made use of the newspapers. In the *Philadelphia Gazette*, in 1745, Peter Hall, a professional upholsterer, advertised his capacity to "teach any Person to draw Draughts in a short Time for Flourishing or Embroidery at the most reasonable Rates."⁷⁷

In 1752, Hanna Hutchinson advertised her capacity to teach all sorts of needlework and embroidery, using either "Cruels, Gold, or Silver."⁷⁸ In 1809, the

⁷² *Royal Gazette*, 1785.

⁷³ *Port Roseway Gazette and Shelburne Advertiser*, 9 June 1785.

⁷⁴ *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 12 January 1790.

⁷⁵ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 10 July 1812, and *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 29 November 1812.

⁷⁶ *Acadian Recorder* [Halifax], 14 June 1817.

⁷⁷ Cited in Alfred Coxe Prime, *The Arts and Crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland and South Carolina 1721 - 1785* (Philadelphia: The Walpole Society, 1929) 203.

⁷⁸ *Halifax Gazette*, 18 April 1752.

Halifax *Weekly Chronicle* was promoting "Female Education," which included embroidery, tambour, and muslin work.⁷⁹ Mrs. Charles Ross and Mrs. Falls of Massachusetts, advertised their school's curriculum as including needlework, embroidery, and fancy work. The Misses Heffernan placed a similar advertisement in 1838,⁸⁰ and in 1842, a seminary teacher, Misses MacKintosh, offered instruction in "Needlework, plain, ornamental point, fancy, coloured velvet and crape embroidery; netting, knitting, German, French, and Italian fancy work..."⁸¹ In Amherst, Nova Scotia, young women could choose between instruction from Miss Wisswall, who offered needlework classes as well as academic subjects, and the Amherst Female Seminary, which offered embroidery instruction in its programme.⁸² And in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Mrs. Dillon offered "instructions in French embroidery, and other fancy work in six lessons, all kinds of fancy and plain work neatly executed ... day and evening school in muslin embroidery, samplers ... white work."⁸³

In 1847 the *Morning Chronicle* was advertising worked muslin collars, which suggests the fashion for embroidered goods was still current.⁸⁴ Ladies' magazines — *Godey's*, *Peterson's*, and *Harper's* — began to advertise in local newspapers around 1854. These magazines all included instructions and patterns for fancy embroidering (names and monograms), garment patterns, and Berlin patterns for household goods and clothing. As these magazines were frequently advertised in Halifax papers, we may assume that Nova Scotia women showed interest in their needlepoint patterns and instructions.

⁷⁹ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 22 May 1812.
⁸⁰ *Acadian Recorder* [Halifax], 14 June 1817.
⁸¹ *New Brunswick Courier*, 5 January 1839.
⁸² *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 11 February 1847.
⁸³ PANS.
⁸⁴ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 11 February 1847.

"Stamped muslin work" was advertised in the *Halifax Journal* in 1854.⁸⁵ This may refer to embroidery patterns ready-stamped on muslin, similar to Berlin wool patterns. In 1867, Berlin wools and "Ladies Work Boxes and Reticules" were being proffered to ladies in Prince Edward Island,⁸⁶ and a decade later Berlin Wools were still being advertised in Halifax papers.⁸⁷ In 1877, yarns and "slipper patterns" were advertised, which seems to convey that the slippers were stitched in Berlin wool, as this was a popular needlepoint project during this period.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ *Halifax Journal*, 15 September 1854.

⁸⁶ *Examiner* [Prince Edward Island], 18 February 1861.

⁸⁷ *Halifax Journal*, 15 April 1861.

⁸⁸ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 2 July 1868.

KNITTING

Knitting, like plain sewing, was an accomplishment common to women of all backgrounds. Stockings, mittens, scarves and blankets were all knit at home. Girls, and often boys, were taught to knit at a young age, and usually were expected to spend time everyday at their knitting. Because knitting required less light than fancy needlework, it was an ideal evening activity.⁸⁹

The Workwoman's Guide, published in London in 1838, advised women that woolen knits were crucial to keep babies and infants warm. Socks, slippers, and woolen boots all contributed to raising healthy children. And woolen wear was not just for kids. According to Evelyn M. Richardson, woolen knits were worn by the whole family, from the skin out:

*In winter each family member wore knitted underwear and stockings the men topped these with homespun shirts and pants, and the women wore homespun dresses or Balmoral skirts. For outdoors there were great woolen mufflers, stocking caps, bonnets, shawls and mittens.*⁹⁰

Anna Green Winslow was accomplished in functional knitting as well as fancy knitting. On Feb. 22, 1772, she "partly new-footed a pair of stockings for Lucinda" (her maid), and on later that winter she learned to knit lace.⁹¹

Francois Lambert Bourneuf was captured by the British in 1809, and incarcerated in Melville Prison, an island military gaol on Halifax's North West Arm. In his diary, he writes about the entrepreneurial activities of the French prisoners of war, describing how they knit and sold woolen goods and were allowed to keep the profits. "When I arrived, all the Frenchmen were working. Some were knitting

⁸⁹ Swan, 25.

⁹⁰ Evelyn M. Richardson, "Sheep, Several-Weeks Pants and Fishermen's Mittens," *Journal of Education*.

⁹¹ Diary of Anna Winslow, 34 and 63.

stockings, mitts, gloves, purses, and some were spinning ..."⁹² Bourneuf quickly set about learning various skills from his fellow inmates and produced his first saleable item:

*The first thing I did was unravel my white nightcap, which my sister had knit for me three years earlier. I wound the wool into a ball, and I asked one of my companions to show me how to knit, which he did with pleasure. I had a hook I made so that I could knit gloves. It took me a long time to make the first pair. Even though the wool was old, I washed the gloves and dyed them and put them on forms. They looked as if they had been made with new wool, and I sold them. I no longer had a nightcap for sleeping.*⁹³

Neither Rebecca Byles or Anna Kearny mention knitting in their diaries, but Louisa Collins writes of carding, spinning, and knitting. She knit by firelight, while her father read, watching "the time for nine o'clock to retire for the night."⁹⁴ Mary Ann Norris does not write specifically of knitting, but she does describe related chores, such as picking wool, spinning and "going to the corner to the Carding Machine."⁹⁵ In *No Place Like Home*, we learn that in her later life, Margaret Dickie Michener knitted "double mittens" for a woolen factory in Michigan.⁹⁶

Mary Vincent contends that by the end of the nineteenth century, the task of knitting was relegated to the elderly. Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith, who lived out her final years with her daughter's family in Cape Breton, spent many of her days knitting. She knit socks for the men, and writes of sewing "a knitted shirt together." Whether or not she enjoyed knitting, it seems that there were days when

⁹² J. Alphonse Deveau, ed. and tans., *Diary of a Frenchman: Lambert Bourneuf's Adventures from France to Acadia, 1781 - 1871* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing Ltd., 1990) 38.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁹⁴ *Diary of Louisa Collins*, 21, 27, and 41.

⁹⁵ *Diary of Mary Ann Norris*.

⁹⁶ Conrad et al.

the prospect was less than enchanting: "January 29, 1891 — I am knitting at my ugly socks."⁹⁷

Laura Aucoin of Grand Etang was born in 1906. She recalls her college roommate wearing knitted underwear and her mother knitting bands to protect the fishermen's arms while hauling nets. Alexandra MacKenzie was born in Orangedale in 1914, and she remembers her father bringing home pieces of wood from the forest and whittling them into long narrow knitting needles.⁹⁸

Ella Muriel Liscombe lived in Sydney, Nova Scotia. She kept a diary in 1935, from which we learn that she and her sister, Ollie, knit frequently. Ollie worked on a mauve skirt and sweater set from January to May. Ella was also working on a sweater and their friend, Emmie Froude, dropped in on an April evening, for a chat and a knit.⁹⁹ Laura Kaulback Slauenwhite also knit frequently in the evening. She knit a mitten, and learned how to knit a hot water bottle cover at a Ladies' Guild meeting.¹⁰⁰

Crochet

Crochet is another venerable needlecraft, but it was not until the reign of Queen Victoria that it truly came into vogue. Crochet was used to make decorative trim for garments such as petticoats or collars, or for household linens, including doilies, antimacassars, and toilettes. Sometimes referred to as 'poor man's lace,' crochet can pass for lace, particularly when done using a tiny hook and very fine yarn or

⁹⁷ Diary of Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith, 8 November 1891 and 29 January 1891.

⁹⁸ Margaret Glabay, "Crafts in Cape Breton, 1900 - 1989" (History 355 paper, University College of Cape Breton: held at the Beaton Institute).

⁹⁹ Conrad et al, 266 - 279.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 296.

thread. In the 1840's, mass-produced crochet pattern-books began to appear and crochet patterns were found in all of the ladies' books.

In 1848, the Halifax *Morning Chronicle* advertised "crotchet colours," and in 1856 they were pitching crocheted collars, amongst other "Lace Goods."¹⁰¹

Annie Rogers Butler made a crocheted toilette set for her Aunt Chloe, while on board the *Daisy*,¹⁰² Rebecca Chase Kinsman Ells was grateful for a crocheted Christmas present she received in 1901:

Father came over the afternoon to stay till after Chris(tmas). He brought me from Rob's mother a beautiful set of crocheted table mats. Something I have long wanted, and so unexpected - it is so kind of her .¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 12 September 1848 and 1 July 1856.

¹⁰² Conrad et al, 142.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 233.

LACEMAKING

Lace could be made using bobbins, needles, knitting needles, crochet hooks, netting needles, tatting shuttles or scissors. At the end of the eighteenth century, the trend was towards bobbin, or pillow. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, embroidery lace, or net lace, made by using a darning machine came into vogue. As the century progressed, other 'imitation' lace became fashionable. Knitted, crochet, netted and tatted lace edgings were made by many women. Tape, or Battenburg lace was also popular. It was made by arranging machine-made lace into a design, and filling in the empty sections with needle-lace stitches. Other lace like forms included cut work, drawn work, broderie anglaise, *Guipure d'art* and Carrickmacross.

Bobbin Lace

Bobbin lace was worked on a 'pricking,' a pattern pricked on to paper or parchment, wrapped around a bolster-shaped pillow. The lace was made by first knotting, and then interlocking the bobbin threads around pins inserted vertically into the pattern. Ipswich lacemakers used hand-spun linen thread. Almost all bobbin lace was used for narrow edgings until, in 1809, John Heathcoat invented a machine, which produced a hexagonal mesh, now called 'bobbinet.'¹⁰⁴

Bobbin lace reached its height of popularity in the eighteenth century, when lace was a particularly overt status symbol. The quantity of lace decorating one's clothes denoted wealth and class. Wealthy women may have been taught the art of bobbin lacemaking, but it was time-consuming and required a certain level of

¹⁰⁴

Ibid.

skill. It is unlikely that many women in eighteenth-century Nova Scotia made much, if any, of their own bobbin lace. In the 1830's, *Godey's* passed by the subject of bobbin lace, saying: "The making of lace is not now among the pursuits of ladies, it will, therefore, be unnecessary to enter into details."¹⁰⁵ The lace-wearing classes would have purchased their bobbin lace, which was imported from England and Massachusetts, the principal colonial lace-making centre.¹⁰⁶ Some women earned their living in New England by making Bobbin lace. In the English midlands lacemaking was more profitable than agriculture.¹⁰⁷ Eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century newspapers in Nova Scotia carry more advertisements for lace. Although there are not specific mentions of bobbin lace, there are references to "blond" lace, which was sometimes used to describe bobbin lace.

Embroidered or Darned Net Lace

In 1824, in Medway, Massachusetts, Dean Walker built a loom with 1,260 shuttles. It produced plain net, which was 'put out,' mainly to rural women, for embroidery. Machine-made net was also embroidered commercially in Ipswich, as well as sold for individual domestic use. The plain net, usually white or black, was stretched across a frame over a pattern, which was outlined using transparent thread, with solid areas of motifs being heavily darned or embroidered. Net lace was influenced by French and Spanish blonde bobbin laces. Kerchiefs, collars, cuffs, wedding veils, and gowns often featured net lace.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Cited in Vincent, 45.
¹⁰⁶ Bath, 305.
¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 306.
¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Tape Lace

Tape lace was made using machine- or hand-made bobbin tapes, which were basted over a pattern, and then carefully joined at all abutting points. Corners were mitred carefully, and the inside curves were gathered neatly. The intervening spaces were filled with buttonholed bars, fancy needlepoint lace fillings, or needle-made mesh. Tape lace could be made over patterns printed on glazed cotton, which made it possible to launder and starch the lace before removing it from its foundation.¹⁰⁹ By the late nineteenth century, tape lace was very popular and was widely promoted by ladies' magazines such as *Needlecraft*, published monthly by Vickery and Hill, in Augusta, Maine.¹¹⁰

Netting and Tatting

Made using timeworn techniques, netted and tatted lace came back into style with a bang in the late nineteenth century. Ladies' books offered dozens of patterns, and Anna Green Winslow writes of learning three new network stitches. In 1812, netting needles and meshes were advertised alongside tambour needles.

Alexandra MacKenzie remembers her father, Daniel Campbell, making fishing nets, using the craft of crochet.¹¹¹ While the needlecraft employed by fishermen is a fascinating subject of its own, it is interesting to consider Alexandra's choice of terms; if they made fishing nets using 'crochet,' then it is possible that what she called 'crochet' (for domestic purposes), was actually embroidery netting. The same technique was used to make large nets and small, delicate fringes.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 308.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 312.

¹¹¹ Galbay, 3.

Nova Scotia Diaries and Lace

Anna Green Winslow's diary contains several references to lace. On November 28, she writes of her intention to send "Nancy Macky a pair of lace mittens," and five months later she mentions having exchanged her patchwork piece for a pair of "curious lace mittens with blue flaps," which she is still intending, but has yet to send Nancy. Anna was taught to knit lace, and wrote of having "learn't three stitches upon net work today."¹¹² Anna Kearny describes a lace cap, altered for her by her friend, Charlotte: "it was old Point once my poor mothers that had long lain useless in my Drawers but now by the variation of Fashion is metamorphosed into a handsome Head Dress."¹¹³

Louisa Collins' diary reference to "working some trimming" could have alluded to embroidery instead of crochet. We can't know if she was working store-bought trimming, or hand knitting her own lace. And again, Mary Ann Norris's allusion to sprigging Kate's veil suggests she may have been practicing embroidered net lace.¹¹⁴

Edward Ross doesn't write of lace in his farm diary. But there is reference to handmade lace in a letter written to one of the women at Ross Farm. In 1880, Maria received the following from one of her nieces:

*Dear Aunt Maria
I received your kind letter a week ago & also the paper with the trimming in — it is lovely & I would like to know who makes such pretty trimming I am very much obliged to you for it — I have just finished a tidy for you which I will send by mail I am going to the city this after noon to get lace to put on it so will probably send it this evening.*¹¹⁵

¹¹² Diary of Anna Green Winslow, 5, 62 - 64.

¹¹³ Diary of Anna Kearny, 10.

¹¹⁴ Diary of Mary Ann Norris, 11 October 1825.

¹¹⁵ Correspondence to the Ross women 1879 - 1890. MGI 794, Ross: 65 - 71.

Lace and Advertising

In 1752, black, gold and silver lace were advertised in both the *Halifax Gazette* and the *Royal American Gazette*.¹¹⁶ The same year, Elizabeth Render publicized her skills at cleaning gold and silver lace.¹¹⁷ Richard Courtney, from London, advertised gold & silver lace in the *Port Roseway Gazeteer* and the *Shelburne Advertiser*.¹¹⁸ The *Halifax Journal* also advertised black and blond laces.¹¹⁹ In 1791, in the *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, there is an advertisement for "bobbings, plain, [and] diaper,"¹²⁰ which may refer to lace. ("Diaper" was eighteenth-century jargon for decorated goods.)

"Tambouring and working on muslins" was advertised in the "Female Education" segment of the *Halifax Weekly Chronicle*,¹²¹ while "tambour needles and cases, netting do, and marshes" were sold as "Hardware."¹²² Netting "marshes" might be the same as 'meshes,' the term used today. Although the "netting do" and marshes could have been referred to equipment used to make fishermen's nets, since they were advertised next to tambour needles, it is more likely that these tools were intended for fancy work. Thread, lace, tapes, bobbins, cotton laces, and edgings were all advertised. A month later, "tamboured mull and leno muslins" were on offer.¹²³ In 1817, the *Acadian Recorder* advertised "thread lace, edging, sampler canvas, sewing silks, twist, threads, tapes, bobbins."¹²⁴

¹¹⁶ *Halifax Gazette*, 18 April 1752 and the *Royal American Gazette*, 1785.

¹¹⁷ Cited in Faith Wallace, "Rigging of Fashions: A glimpse of Clothing and the Fashionable Ideal in 18th Century Halifax," 1995.

¹¹⁸ *Port Roseway Gazeteer* and the *Shelburne Advertiser*, 9 June 1785.

¹¹⁹ *Halifax Journal*, 28 October 1785.

¹²⁰ *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 29 November 1791.

¹²¹ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 22 December 1809.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 22 May 1812.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 10 July 1812.

¹²⁴ *Acadian Recorder* [Halifax], 14 June 1817.

In 1838, DeBlois and Merkel advertised the following goods as up for auction: "A case of tapes, bobbins, Laces and cotton balls."¹²⁵ The Misses MacKintosh's curriculum promotion, mentioned in the embroidery chapter, is also of interest in reference to lacemaking. They claimed to teach "needlework, plain, ornamental point, fancy coloured velvet and crape embroidery; netting, knitting; German, French & Italian fancy work."¹²⁶ "Ornamental point" refers to lacemaking, and netting was a technique for making ornamental fringes. That it was taught in conjunction with ladies' needlework that decorative needle skills were in as much demand as functional instruction. "German, French and Italian fancy work" conveys lacemaking rather than embroidery, as lace patterns or varieties were described by either their country of origin, or that with which they were currently associated; ie., wherever they were being produced commercially.

In 1842, the *Morning Chronicle* advertised lace, edgings, worked muslin collars, and "Black and White Blonde Gimps."¹²⁷ Worked muslin suggests a kind of white work closely associated with New England needlecraft at the beginning of the century. White work falls somewhere between lacemaking and embroidery. "Blonde" is another term for bobbin lace. Later in the decade, Charles Robson was promoting "Black Lace, various widths; worked muslin collars; white and black lace demi veils; thread and plait laces and edgings," side by side with McAgy & Neal's gold lace, and Duffus, Tupper & Co.'s laces and edgings, muslin collars, and Ladies' Lace Neckties.¹²⁸ In May, 1856, the *Morning Chronicle* advertised "traced muslin collars and trimmings; Irish point collars and sleeves; ribbons, laces, Blond Lace

¹²⁵ *Halifax Journal*, 9 April 1838. Incidentally, newspaper research for references of textiles becomes easier in the 1830s, as advertisement space gives way to greater editorial and political coverage.

¹²⁶ *New Brunswick Courier*, 31 December 1842.

¹²⁷ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 11 February 1842.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 September 1848.

Falls; worked collars, insertions; worked muslin habit shirts; stamped collars."¹²⁹
Many of these items may have been made of lace.

The advertisements for the ladies' books — *Godey's*, *Peterson's*, and *Harper's* — were mentioned in the Embroidery chapter. These magazines would have included some lace patterns, mostly for knitted, netted, crocheted, or broderie anglaise lace.

Advertisements for "Macassar Oil: for the Growth, Restoration and Improvement of Human Hair."¹³⁰ may seem at first to bear little relation to needlework. However, Macassar-oiled hair was notorious for staining the backs of chairs and chesterfields, and the antimacassar was the Victorian lady's defense weapon against well-greased callers. These lace doilies were knit, crocheted, and tatted by the dozen to protect upholstered furniture. Ready-made antimacassars were frequently advertised.

The number and variety of advertisements for lace goods and equipment seem to decrease by the latter part of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, there are more advertisements for ready-made clothing and trims. It seems logical to assume that the introduction of the sewing machine, as well as the ever-increasing availability of manufactured lace and decorative trims, both contributed to the decline of fancy lacework.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 17 May 1856.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 1 July 1856.

PATTERNS AND LADIES' BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Women did not have equal access to printed patterns in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Most women made their garments according to the style of clothes already in their wardrobe. New styles or innovations could be copied from friends, or from fashion plates. In 1869, Catherine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe published *American Woman's Home*, in which they advised:

To make a Frock— *The best way for a novice is to get a dress fitted (not sewed) at the best mantua maker's. Then take out a sleeve, rip it to pieces, and cut out a paper pattern. Then take out half of the waist, (it must have a seam in front,) and cut out a pattern of back and fore-body, both lining and outer part. In cutting the patterns, iron the pieces smooth, let the paper be stiff, and with a pin prick holes in the paper ...*¹³¹

Women would attempt to revitalize or personalize her garments by adding different trims and accessories. Bonnets were frequently trimmed and retrimmed at home, allowing women to update their 'look' with a minimum of expense. Women would save trims and buttons from discarded outfits to refurbish other garments. They might remake an old dress into another smaller garment, or use it to cut out a child's outfit.

Crewel, or surface embroidery was another means of updating a garment, and Mary Landon and Susan Burrows Swan illustrate that women were exceptionally imaginative in finding design ideas for their garment embroidery:

Designs for crewel embroidery came from illustrative materials as illuminated manuscripts, needlework pattern books, botany books, ornithology books, wallpapers and engravings. Imported fabric, especially from India and China also provided ideas. Needlework pattern books were published in England, [as well as] copies of older German and Italian books. ... Books of this type were owned

¹³¹ Catherine E. and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *American Woman's Home* [1869], (Hartford, Connecticut: Stowe Day Foundation, 1975) 355.

*by the better educated and wealthier families who had more time for needlework.*¹³²

However, according to Margaret Vincent, women generally relied on others to supply patterns for embroidery at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They took their linens to be marked by a professional artist, purchased hand-drawn designs at a 'fancy' shop, or adapted patterns from existing pieces of needlework.¹³³

Sharing patterns was another means by which women acquired new embroidery patterns. Pattern sharing also exemplifies the social component of needlework. Visits with friends and relatives frequently revolved around learning a new pattern, or attempting it together. Louisa Collins, Mary Ann Norris, and Almira Bell all refer to sharing patterns in their diaries. Sharing patterns was a sign of neighbourliness or friendship. Almira Bell writes of showing an acquaintance her new bonnet; however, the woman didn't wear it properly. And Almira wasn't sorry when her friend decided against making up her own bonnet in the new style.

The publication of ladies' books made fashion plates accessible to more women, and also disseminated patterns and sewing techniques. Because women of this period were such experienced seamstresses, simple exposure to new styles was often enough to enable them to adapt current fashions and sewing techniques for themselves. But the explanations and advice given in these books probably helped novice sewers and young women to improve their results. Ladies' books quickly became trusted tools for educating young ladies in sewing skills.

The instructions given in ladies' books, whether for sewing, knitting, or embroidery, appear to have assumed a certain level of knowledge and skill, including basic stitches for all varieties of needlework. Usually girls would be taught these skills at home, beginning at a young age. However, ladies' books and

¹³² *American Crewelwork*, 23.

¹³³ Vincent, 20.

magazines in the late-nineteenth century give more detailed instructions, suggesting that plain sewing declined in significance as part of girls' basic education.

In the 1840s, needlework books began to appear en masse, making fancy needlework accessible to increasing numbers of women. According to Susan Burrows Swan,

From posterity's standpoint, these books made their greatest contribution in an effort to distinguish their books from those of the competition, the authors took to making tiny variations on well-known stitches and then re-naming the stitches, often with elegant sounding names.¹³⁴

Annotated Bibliography of Ladies' Books

The following bibliographic essay is arranged chronologically, and should serve only as a starting point for further research.

As do many nineteenth-century domestic manuals, *The Workwoman's Guide*, "By a Lady" (Birmingham, 1838), assumes a moral as well as practical responsibility towards her reader. While the guide offers "instructions to the inexperienced in cutting out and completing those articles of wearing apparel &c. which are usually made at home; ... knitting &c," the frontispiece reminds us of our enduring moral obligations: "She stretcheth out her hand to the Poor/She looketh well to the ways of her Household."

It was a particularly nineteenth-century mind-set that believed that knowledge and skill — even those of the seamstress — were of little value unless they were used to serve others, and the author is careful to accentuate her desire to enable women, in particular "Clergymen's Wives, Young Married Women, School-

¹³⁴

Plain and Fancy, 205.

Mistresses, and Ladies' Maids," to become capable of sewing for their own families, or for less fortunate neighbours.¹³⁵

Proficiency in domestic accomplishments was perceived as an indication of both a woman's moral character, and her desire for self-improvement. The Victorians regarded self-help as the pinnacle of early and spiritual virtue, particularly in reference to the poor. Sewing one's own clothing demonstrated a commitment to the values of thrift and self-sufficiency, which were vigorously inculcated in all women of little means:

*The direct saving of expense upon articles of dress, were they qualified to work for themselves, would, with all persons, be an important annual item The thrifty disposition of order and management, inspired by conscious ability and successful exertion, in one leading branch of good housewifery, cannot be too highly prized or diligently cultivated; for the result is moral.*¹³⁶

Aside from its interesting cultural implications, the *Workwoman's Guide* is a useful document regarding the knowledge and skills the author considered essential for a competent housewife. The table of contents summarizes the significant articles, which include: needlework stitches, marking, darning, braiding, and general rules for completing work; observations on purchasing goods; general guidelines for cutting out; knitting and knitting patterns for stockings, mittens, comforters, and cotton Doyleys; straw-platting; bobbin lace; necessary linen (clothes) for men, women, and children, including a housemaid's pinafore, wagoner's smock, clergyman's frock, mourning and funeral costumes, and ordinary day dress; house linen, which encompassed bedroom, table, kitchen, panty, housemaid's, and stable linen, and the quantities and grades required; and receipts (recipes) for marking ink, cleaning gold and silver lace, and washing blonde lace.

¹³⁵ *The Workwoman's Guide, By a Lady* (Birmingham, 1838; reprint, Guilford, Connecticut: Opus Publications Inc., 1986).

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, iv.

Other sewing manuals were aimed at a more leisured readership, but they too had an underlying agenda. If working-class women had to be instructed on how best to work, the rising middle classes had to be taught to 'leisure' — in an appropriate fashion. The following excerpt from *A Winter Gift for Ladies* (New York, 1844), illustrates the degree to which Americans (and Canadians) looked to Europe for authority on cultural and social niceties:

*To the Ladies of America. It is customary amongst the German ladies to have at hand some light piece of work, with which they can at any time employed. When passing the evening in one another's society, ... or while sipping coffee, or taking ices at the public gardens, they consider their knitting or netting Wheedles an indispensable accompaniment.*¹³⁷

The focus of this ladies' book is on practical, yet fancy needlework, the kind that women could work at in company. The table of contents includes knitting terms, lace edgings, and patterns for socks, mufflers, purses, blankets, pincushion covers, and curtains. Its preface informs us that *A Winter Gift for Ladies* is by way of "being instructions in knitting, netting, and crochet work; containing the newest and most fashionable patterns. From the latest London edition. Revised and Enlarged by an American Lady."¹³⁸ (Note how the preface advertises the book's English provenance, while professing its improvement — "Revised and Enlarged" — by an American.) The original of this book is at Ross Thomson House.

Godey's Lady's Book began publication in 1838, and continued until the end of the century. Arlene Zeger Wiczzyk's, *A Treasury of Needlework Projects from Godey's Lady's Book*, is a useful compilation of patterns from throughout the magazine's existence, although it is unfortunate that the projects are not dated individually.¹³⁹ The Public Archives of Nova Scotia holds four copies of *Godey's*, of

¹³⁷ *A Winter Gift for Ladies*, revised by an American Lady (New York: Bedford, Printer, 1844) 8.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Arlene Zeger Wiczzyk, ed., *A Treasury of Needlework Projects from Godey's Lady's Book* (New York: Arco, 1972).

which I looked at two editions, from 1862 and 1877. The Nova Scotia Museum also has several copies, but the best collection is found at the Yarmouth County Archives. *Godey's* included patterns for embroidery, including outline, corner (for pocket handkerchiefs), fancy monograms, names, and alphabets. Some of the patterns featured in Wiczuk's collection include: Brussels embroidery (darning on net); crocheted purses and lace collars; a knitted undervest and drawers for a toddler; Berlin wool work slippers; Broderie anglaise; quilting design; a tatted sofa tidy; and a sewing pattern for a Lady's Wrapper.

An 1862 issue contains a pattern for a beaded footstool, a poem on worsted work, and "Centre Table Gossip," which advises:

Our centre tables are no longer exclusively decorated with brilliant chenille, and wools, and Broderie Anglaise. Even the inevitable Afghan has given place to the long-banished stocking; and, economy having become the fashion, shirts have take their old place in the work baskets of our lady readers.¹⁴⁰

The same volume features a long article on remaking and mending, and one on the "Science of Dress-Cutting." There are also instructions for knitted mittens and cuffs for little girls of about three years of age, and a list of articles supplied by *Godey's*, including a needle case, pattern book for embroideries and "How to Make a Dress."

Fifteen years later, *Godey's* are advertising J&P Coats' Sewing Thread and the new Wilcox & Gibbs Automatic silent sewing machine. This particular issue provided diagrams for gentleman's shirts, knitted mats, an ornamental work basket of Panama canvas, and instructions on cutting and making sleeves for a chemise.¹⁴¹

Peterson's magazine was published in the United States around the same time as *Godey's*. In *Civil War Ladies: Fashions and Needle Arts of the Early 1860's.*, R.L. Shep features excerpts taken from 1861 and 1864 issues.¹⁴² Although

¹⁴⁰ *Godey's Lady's Book*, 64 (1862) 103. PANS GT G55.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 94 (1877), PANS GT G55.

¹⁴² R.L. Shep, *Civil War Ladies: Fashions and Needle Arts of the Early 1860s*.

Peterson's included literature and poetry selections, Shep's excerpts are chosen with a view to understanding contemporary fashion. We learn that *Peterson's* readership was interested in both functional and decorative needlework. The magazine featured templates for marking alphabets, with examples of monograms and female names, as well as knitting instructions for a morning cap, neck tie, baby's sock, and a border for a knitted counterpane. Patterns included embroidered trim, braiding, crocheted purse, antimacassar, infant's hood, and a fancy basket. Berlin wool work patterns were often featured, including geometric design for a bag, mats, slippers, and cushions. Patchwork designs and instructions on transferring patterns using transfer paper are side by side with patterns for netting curtains, a workbag, and a bed fringe. A "clover leaf" pattern for tatting, was sent in by one subscriber, who thought it might be new to some ladies.

An article entitled "The Use and Abuse of Colours," repeats itself from the *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1862. It was not uncommon for ladies' books and magazines to copy from each other.

In 1869, Catherine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe published the *American Woman's Home*, one of several books they co-wrote on the ever-popular nineteenth-century subject of 'Household Management.'¹⁴³ The free-flowing text rings with the Beecher sisters' convictions regarding the importance of women's work in promoting Christian family values. They extol the merits of teaching every girl plain sewing and of having a work basket always at the ready. They suggest that a good beginning project for girls was doll making, and fitting a doll's wardrobe. In the chapter on "Sewing, cutting and mending," the sisters offer practical hints on stitches, how to make a frock, advice on different kinds of cloth, and how to mend sheets worn thin in the centre.

¹⁴³ Catherine Stowe and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *American Woman's Home* (New York, 1869).

Mrs. Isabella Beeton is renowned for her *Book of Household Management*, a hefty opus that advises on all matters of domestic, with particular reference to cooking.¹⁴⁴ However, she also wrote *Beeton's Book of Needlework* (London, 1870), an equally sizable volume devoted to the needle arts, including tatting, embroidery, crochet, knitting, netting, point lace work, *guipure d'art*, and Berlin work.¹⁴⁵ The book illustrated with various patterns, embroidery and crochet stitches, and diagrams that show how one's hands are positioned for tatting. Her knitting instructions include basics such as casting on, plain knitting and purling, increasing and decreasing, etc. Her prose style is informal and reassuring, describing netting as "so easy to do, ... most difficult to describe." The text is informative, but fairly elementary, seemingly targeted for women with little background in needlework. She provides definitions and illustrated examples of various laces, including point lace (that made with a needle), *guipure d'art* (an imitation of the ancient Guipure lace, worked on a square network of linen thread, worked in raised and intersecting patterns), and Berlin work (which she classifies as any stitches made upon canvas, using wools, silk, or beads).

E. Butterick & Co. was one of the earliest manufacturers of sewing patterns, and the name is still familiar to those of us today who sew our own clothing, using their patterns. In 1872, Butterick's Canadian office was in Montreal, and their Halifax agent was E.W. Chipman & Co., of Granville Street.¹⁴⁶ Chipman was a wholesale and retail importer of drapery. Drapery included fabric, furniture prints, ready-made jackets and dresses, blankets, gloves, hosiery, and "Mourning." Chipman advertised Buttericks as "celebrated" for their garment patterns for ladies,

¹⁴⁴ Isabella Beeton, *Beeton's Book of Household Management* (London: S.O. Beeton, 1859 - 61, reprint. Chancellor Press, 1994).

¹⁴⁵ Isabella Beeton, *Beeton's Book of Needlework* (London, 1870).

¹⁴⁶ *E. Butterick & Co.'s Catalogue Fall* (New York, 1872).

"misses," boys, and small children of both sexes. Patterns bought by mail-order, postage-paid, on the receipt of the published price.

Buttericks boasted that their patterns were superior, even "perfect," having been tested, available in different sizes, and accompanied by sewing instructions, including advice on taking measurements. Buttericks also manufactured and advertised sewing supplies (ie., measuring tapes), and alongside the pattern illustrations were advertisements for such household goods as oven ranges. The 1872 catalogue includes pages of illustrated outfits for women and children, sometimes showing the full dress, and often just the sleeves. Patterns ranged from single sizes of infants' shirts to nineteen different sizes for ladies' dresses. The prices also spanned the spectrum, from a nickel for a girl's sun-hat, to ten cents for a girl's sleeve, to fifty cents for a lady's gored wrapper.

However, even if Buttericks' patterns were foolproof, *The Ladies Treasury* (1876) insisted that sewing a dress was not a job for the uninstructed, and provided tips for the novice seamstress:

It is almost impossible to learn dressmaking without taking lessons, while few are competent to teach; they almost invariably omit to describe minor details upon which completeness depends ... To cut out and fit a bodice. Take an old bodice, lay the back flat on a table, upon this pin a piece of stout paper — pin nearly close to the seams, then turn it on the right side, and with a very large needle prick it through the seams to the paper beneath. On taking off the paper cut an inch beyond these pin holes.¹⁴⁷

The Ladies Treasury assumed that its readers would engage the services of a seamstress for at least part of the dressmaking project. The author explains how to cut out a new garment using old cloth, before having a seamstress try on the pattern pieces.

¹⁴⁷ Cited in Norah Waugh, *The Cut of Women's Clothes*.

S. Annie Frost's book, *The Ladies Guide to Needlework* (New York, 1877), is similar in content to Mrs. Beeton's tome, (although appreciably slimmer).¹⁴⁸ She describes techniques for embroidery, braiding, applique, canvas work, beadwork, lacework, tatting, knitting, crochet, netting, transferring, perforated card work, patchwork, tambour work, and doll dressing. Frost details various embroidery stitches and the principal laces, including Guipure lace, which she describes as tape lace, using filling-stitches on machine-made tapes. She comments on the current rage for old lace, and bemoans its high price:

*heavy and elaborate point lace is superior to loom manufactures that supersede it — but the expense places beyond the reach of the majority; even most trifling articles in point lace are at present luxuries.*¹⁴⁹

If point lace was the height of fashion, Frost views tambour work as somewhat passé. However, she is confident of the enduring properties of patchwork, being "our first work and our last;" as it doesn't require very fine needlework, patchwork was considered ideal for both ham-fisted novices and those elderly women whose eyesight and nimbleness of finger are on the decline.

Madame Goubaud's Needlework Album was also published circa 1877, by S.O. Beeton in London, the publisher of the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, and incidentally, the widower of Isabella. The *Needlework Album* contains colour plates of Berlin patterns, including a sofa cushion and slippers for the Prince of Wales, featuring monkeys and an arabesque pattern.¹⁵⁰ This book is a good source for historical colour preferences and I would advise the Museum to acquire some photographs of the plates.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Cited in Shep, *Civil War Ladies*.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ *Madame Goubaud's Needlework Album* (London: S.O. Beeton, c. 1877).

¹⁵¹ The copy I looked at belongs to Faith Wallace.

The Dictionary of Needlework, by Sophia Frances Anne Caulfield and Blanche C. Seward, was originally published in London, in 1882, proclaimed (in the reprint) as the "Golden Age of Needlework."¹⁵² Profusely illustrated, with over eight hundred diagrams and pictures, it includes comprehensive instructions on methods and patterns. The reprinted edition (528 pages) contains period advertisements for such products and services as: Myra's Publications, sold at Goubaud & Son, in Covent Garden; Indiana Cloth; handmade underclothing; instruction books for practical dressmaking; Rowland's Macassar Oil, "best known promoter and restorer of human hair;" and a Bond Street School of Embroidery, whose specialty was "Finished Antimacassars, beautifully Embroidered in outline in Washing Silk."

The dictionary is nothing if not thorough; its frontispiece claims it to be an:

Encyclopedia of Artistic, Plain and Fancy Needlework, dealing fully with the details of all the stitches employed, the method of working the materials used, the meaning of technical terms, and, where necessary, tracing the origin and history of the various works described.

The historical detail is interesting, and while the methodological instructions are graphic enough for a novice needleworker to follow, the book would present a challenge for one not previously instructed in the basic skills.

Although lexicography implies, to the modern reader, an unbiased, or at least neutral treatment of the subject at hand, the authors of the *Dictionary of Needlework* were obviously not constrained by impartiality. Here they offer their verdict on the historical progression of needlepoint:

The Berlin wool was superior in texture and in the varieties of its dyes to the English wool, but with it was introduced large sized canvas and cross stitch, innovations that rendered the figured designs coarse and inartistic. These were gradually displaced by

¹⁵² Sophia Frances Anne Caulfield and Blanche C. Seward, *The Dictionary of Needlework* (London, 1882, reprint. New York: Arno Press, 1972).

*the impossible parrots, animals, and groups of flowers known in the present day as Berlin patterns, which have done so much to debase the public taste as far as fancy work is concerned.*¹⁵³

And they are equally decided as to who should (and who should not) attempt the more formidable needlework projects:

*Crewel Work is a difficult embroidery, because it depends for its success not upon the exact putting in of stitches, and their regularity, or upon the time and labour bestowed upon reproducing a pattern, but upon the absolute necessity there is for the mind of the worker being something more than a copying machine, possessing the power of grasping and working out an idea of its own, and of being able to distinguish between a good or bad design or system of colouring.*¹⁵⁴

The Popular Art Instructor was published in Windsor (Ontario) and Toronto in 1887, and was available "by subscription only."¹⁵⁵ It featured instructions for techniques from transferring designs and "pouncing," to various stitches, such as ribbon work, applique, drawn work, net work, macrame lace, and "crazy work." Needlework projects included ottomans, trimmed clothes baskets, paper holders, slipper cases, and fire screens. Also included were how-to's for stampwork, patterns, "the mechanical enlargement of designs," blue or white powder, and French indelible stamping.

Therese de Dillmont's *The Complete Encyclopedia of Needlework* is a reference of equal importance to Caulfield and Seward's *Dictionary*.¹⁵⁶ However, instead of featuring a lexically structured framework, it is organized in chapters by subject. Originally published in French and German in 1886, it was reprinted in English (and other languages) several times between 1886 and 1930. Dillmont covers a full range of topics: plain sewing, sewing and machine embroidery,

¹⁵³ Ibid., 28.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 97.

¹⁵⁵ *The Popular Art Instructor* (Windsor and Toronto: J.B. Young & Co. Publishers, 1887).

¹⁵⁶ Therese de Dillmont, *The Complete Encyclopedia of Needlework* (1886, reprint. Philadelphia: Running Press, 1978).

mending, embroidery on white materials, linen embroidery, embroidery on silk and velvet, gold embroidery, applique, tapestry, knitting, crochet, tatting, macrame, filet lace, openwork on linen, embroidered laces, needle-made laces, pillow laces, needlework trimmings such as plaits and braids, as well as miscellaneous directions for techniques such as tracing, washing lace and cleaning embroideries.

Despite Dillmont's acknowledgement that "information about sewing by hand is superfluous, especially in these days when the machine so often takes the place of the hand in sewing," she includes a chapter on plain sewing, claiming it as the most important branch of needlework and the basis of all other branches of needlework. She writes of knitting as one of the oldest branches of needlework, for which it is scarcely possible to invent new stitches or patterns. Though knitting was always used principally for stocking work, she prescribes its usefulness in making many other articles. Her book incorporates diagrams to illustrate casting on, as well as other stitches, and patterns for knitted lace. Crochet and tatting are treated in a similar manner; the tatting illustrations show the five hand positions, vaguely reminiscent of ballet. Tatting patterns are for braids and edgings. Netting comes under the heading of filet lace, and open work includes drawn-thread and cut work. Instructions are given for pillow lace, although this was seldom practiced by the end of the nineteenth century.

Patterns and Ladies' Books in Nova Scotian Diaries

In Anna Green Winslow's diary, there is mention of a discussion over what is meant by a "queen's nightcap" — whether it is a "black skull cap linn'd with red." The notes accompanying the diary tell us that a queen's cap is a large, full ruffled cap, the sort brought to mind by portraits of Martha Washington. However, the significance of the reference is that Anna and her friends were conferring over a specific pattern, which

is probably a common means by which fashions were disseminated. In the end, a Miss Vans offered to make the cap for Anna.¹⁵⁷ Anna also makes reference to “a droll figure of a young lady, in or under, which you please, a tasty head Dress. It was taken from a print that came over in one of the last ships from London.”¹⁵⁸

Rebecca Chase Kinsman Ells had some of her clothes made by a neighbour, and on January 25, 1901, she went up to Mrs. Burbridges to get her waists fitted.¹⁵⁹ We can surmise that Rebecca didn't herself own a pattern, as she paid someone to fit her clothes. Rebecca did order something from T. Eatons, in November 1901, but she continued to have her own clothes made locally.

Laura Kaulback Slauenwhite supplemented her income as a housekeeper by sewing for others. On March 3, 1936, she writes about basting a dress, and then going up to fit it. This may be the dress that she mentions making for Freelove, for which she was paid one dollar. Although Laura doesn't specifically refer to using a pattern, she was capable of cutting out a dress to her client's satisfaction.

Patterns and Ladies Books in Advertisements

Eighteenth-century newspapers advertised waistcoat patterns. These probably were not patterns to copy and cut out, but ready-embroidered waistcoat pieces, pre-marked for cutting out and stitching together. The waistcoats would still need fitting, but their basic shape, and some of the decorative finishing, were pre-made. The *Royal Gazette* also advertised patterns for gowns, which may have referred to

¹⁵⁷ Diary of Anna Green Winslow, 10 March 1772, 42.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 18 April 1772, 63.

¹⁵⁹ Conrad et al, 209.

patterned material, rather than the actual garment pattern.¹⁶⁰ Waistcoat patterns were available in 1812.¹⁶¹

In May 1856, "traced muslin collars" were being advertised in the *Morning Chronicle*, which may have referred to collars pre-stamped with patterns to be embroidered.¹⁶² There is another reference to stamped muslin work in July of that year.¹⁶³

Ladies' magazines were sold at Fuller's American Book Store, and whether or not Halifax women were on the cutting edge of fashion, they did not have to wait too long to read about the latest trends. In June 1854, the *Halifax Journal* was advertising *Harper's Bazaar* and *Godey's* issues for the previous month.¹⁶⁴ And in September, both the June and September issues of *Peterson's* and *Godey's*, as well as the August issue of *Harper's* were advertised.¹⁶⁵

In 1867, the *Halifax Journal* was advertising "Household Manuals," which would have contained some sewing instructions, although not necessarily patterns. Aside from *Harper's* and *Godey's*, were the *World of Fashion*, *English Woman*, *Young English Woman*, and *Mme. DeMorest*.¹⁶⁶

In 1874, the *Liverpool Advertiser* offered the "cutting of all kinds [of] Men's and Boy's clothing," and announced the arrival of the New York Fashion Plates for boys.¹⁶⁷ Also advertised were Miss Porter's dressmaking skills and plain-sewing instruction, and Mrs. McConney's chart-cutting lessons. These indicate that there were women in Liverpool who either commissioned their garments, or learned

¹⁶⁰ *Royal Gazette & Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 17 August 1790. *Royal American Gazette*, 6 June 1785.

¹⁶¹ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 10 July 1812.

¹⁶² *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 17 May 1856.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1 July 1856.

¹⁶⁴ *Halifax Journal*, 14 June 1854.

¹⁶⁵ *Halifax Journal*, 15 September 1854.

¹⁶⁶ *Halifax Journal*, 1 February and 15 April, 1867.

¹⁶⁷ *Liverpool Advertiser*, 27 August 1874.

dressmaking skills in order to cut their own patterns at home. Despite the increasing numbers of advertisements for ready-made clothing, there must have been many women still sewing their own clothes in the late nineteenth century.

In 1896, the *Lunenburg Progress* enticed their readers with visions of stamped goods — silks and other findings — “see these pretty articles.”¹⁶⁸ This implies embroidery items, possibly silk outline, as patterns for outline embroidery were sold as pre-stamped linen during this period. In 1902, the *Lunenburg Progress & Enterprise* advertised dressmaking, Butterick patterns, and Ladies’ Tailoring.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ *Lunenburg Progress*, 28 October 1896.

¹⁶⁹ *Progress & Enterprise* [Lunenburg], 26 November 1902.

THEMES FOR INTERPRETATION

Socializing

Needlework was one of the few domestic chores that women could carry out while visiting with family or friends. Many kinds of needlework were portable, and as women were experts at sewing and knitting, they could usually do the routine work while carrying on conversation. Needlework was also something a mother could accomplish while supervising her children at their work, play or studies.

It was common for families to spend their evenings together, the women engaged in needlework while someone, perhaps a brother or father, read aloud. Louisa Collins describes such an episode, and it seems logical that this would be a customary way of passing winter evenings.

October the 6 (1815): ...The remainder of the day we sat upstairs reading and knitting. Patience and Perseverence is the title of the book we are perusing; I think it a very good thing. The weather has been rather dull today — which prevented us from taking a walk. I have left them all seated round the table at their domestic employments, some sewing and others knitting and Papa at the head reading. — I must hurry to return to my work or I shall be in disgrace.¹⁷⁰

Men might also have used this time to accomplish tasks such as repairing fishing nets. Alexandra MacKenzie remembers her father making nets while the women of the family wove and knit.¹⁷¹

It was not uncommon when staying at someone's house to help with the family sewing. When Anna Green Winslow visited her Aunt Deming, Anna helped to sew shirts for her uncle and a border for her aunt's apron, while her cousin Sally helped Anna to make shifts. Miss Caty Vans made a "queen's night cap" for Anna, and while it is unclear whether this was an act of friendship, or if she

¹⁷⁰ *Louisa's Diary*, 27.

¹⁷¹ Glabay, 3.

was paid, either circumstance is realistic. Anna's visit also engendered the exchange of needlework between friends: Anna traded her patchwork pieces for a "pair of curious lace mitts with blue flags."¹⁷²

Louisa Collins often wrote of being alone in her spinning room, but she sometimes had company. On September 12, 1815, after a morning spent spinning by herself, Louisa's mother joined her in her work, while her sisters accompanied them with their sewing. After their work was done they relaxed with a romp in the hay.¹⁷³

Quilting parties were mentioned by both Mary Ann Norris and Almira Bell. Mary Ann also helped her neighbours and friends with various sewing tasks, including a Bombazine gown for Mrs. Allison and mourning clothes for a friend's funeral. She joined in with wedding preparations, and also sewed for children. Mary Ann's diary gives the impression that many social occasions were accompanied by needlework, and many of her solitary sewing tasks were done for the benefit of either her family, or for the larger community. She attended many sewing parties, and describes a quilting party at her home on March 23, 1825:

*Miss Bayard, Sarah Campbell, Mary and Margaret Allison, Lavinia Whidden, Robert Buskirk and Elisha DeWolf dined with us. The ladies came to help us quilt but the gentlemen were so troublesome all the morning that they would not allow them to do much. In the evening our party increased. Mr. and Mrs. James Fox, Mrs. John Whidden, John and James Allison, David Whidden and John Prescott joined us. After supper we repaired to the kitchen and danced a quadrille and country dance.*¹⁷⁴

Almira Bell describes two different quilting parties in her diary, both of which were attended by men and women. One was a serious work session where the ladies sewed all evening, to the great disappointment of the gentlemen.

¹⁷² Diary of Anna Winslow.
¹⁷³ Louisa's Diary.
¹⁷⁴ Diary of Mary Ann Norris.

On the second occasion the quilting is accompanied by singing and chatting. Almira also refers to finishing a parasol that she was doing for a friend.¹⁷⁵

Edward Ross's diary describes spinning frolics instead of quilting parties. It is full of social/work occasions, such as carding wool, breaking flax, and planting potatoes. When Reece came down to measure the boys for jackets, he was to spend the night. Rachael and Mary cut out and partly made a gown for Mrs. Hutt, who entertained Edward with fortune telling.¹⁷⁶

Later in the century, living in Lynn, Massachusetts, Hannah Richardson wrote of sewing for male friends who were far away from their sisters and mothers. Hannah also enjoyed sewing with her friends — Susie Walsh stitched Hannah's morning dress while Hannah played the flutina.¹⁷⁷

Margaret Marshall Saunders was a professional author (*Beautiful Joe*), but she still found time in 1907 to attend a "thimble" party in Halifax.¹⁷⁸ Mary Smith, living in rural Cape Breton, often wrote in her diary of occasions when she would knit, while Sarah sewed and Flora spun wool. Mary Smith seemed always to be making socks or mittens for someone, often family, but sometimes not. She mentions that Cassie Black came out with the Teacher to make Sarah's dress, and also refers to a time that Bella and Ethel were up at Mrs. Baynes to sew for the Trinidad mission and practice singing.¹⁷⁹

Ella Liscombe spent evenings knitting with her sister, after working at the Bank of Montreal during the day. She also mentions having a friend over one evening, who brings her own knitting.¹⁸⁰ Perhaps because she was employed as a housekeeper, Laura Kaulback Slauenwhite seemed to do most of her needlework

175 Diary of Almira Bell.
176 Diary of Edward Ross, 794 - 95.
177 Conrad et al.
178 Ibid.
179 Diary of Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith.
180 Conrad et al.

alone in the evenings. However, she enjoyed the company of other women at the Women's Institute and Guild meetings, where they practice textile crafts together.¹⁸¹

The oral history projects HERO, Ross Farm, and Jeddore Oyster Pond all reflect some social aspects of sewing, including memories of knitting for soldiers during the wars, and of women joining forces at a quilting or matting party.

Reflections of Women's Roles

The following references shed some insight on how needlework reflected the roles of women, while helping to inform perceptions of both gentility and utility.

Anne Bradstreet, whose first book of poetry appeared in London in 1650, clearly felt that she was incurring odium by stepping outside the role prescribed for women, in exchanging her needle for a pen:

*I am obnoxious to each carping tongue
Who says my hand a needle better fits,
A Poets pen all scorn I should thus wrong,
For such despite they cast on female wits.*¹⁸²

Mistress Saltonstall sent her sixteen-year-old daughter to Boston in 1684 — if Elizabeth would not help with the churning, then her mother insisted that she learn to embroider.¹⁸³

In 1777, Nancy Shippen, aged fourteen, was told by her mother that "Needle work is a most important branch of female education." Nancy belonged to a prominent Philadelphia family, and received schooling in other areas, including

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Cited in Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, (1929, reprint. New York, 1966), 132.

¹⁸³ Cited in Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991) 73.

how to hold her head and shoulders, make a curtsy, enter and leave a room, and give and receive objects.¹⁸⁴

One young American man in need of a bride was careful to lay out his particulars when he advertised in the *Gazette of the State of Georgia*, in 1784.

*Matrimony. Wanted, by a young gentleman just beginning housekeeping, a Lady, between 18 and 20 years of age, with a good education, and a fortune not less than 5000 pounds.....with a good set of teeth, no pride or affectation....not over fond of dress, though always decent and clean; that will entertain her husband's friends with affability and cheerfulness, and prefer his company to publick diversions and gadding about; ... Any Lady answering this description, and disposed for matrimony, is desired to direct to O.C. to be left at the Post Office in Savannah. N.B. None need apply who fail in any one particular.*¹⁸⁵

In 1792, Lady Pennington advised her readers that "All kinds of plain work, though no very polite accomplishment, you must be so well versed in as to be able to cut out, make and mend your own linen."

In 1805, a magazine article titled "The Female Sex," made the following grievance:

*While I am conscious of being an intelligent moral being; while I see myself denied, in so many cases, the exercise of my own discretion, incapable of separate property, subject in all periods of my life to the will of another, on whose bounty I am made to depend for food and shelter; when I see myself, in my relation to society, regarded merely as a beast, as an insect, passed over, in the distribution of public duties, as absolutely nothing....*¹⁸⁶

Few women aired their grievances so openly, but there were many willing to denounce those who challenged correct behaviour. "A woman who does not know

¹⁸⁴ Esther Armes, *Nancy Shippen Her Journal Book* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1935) 40. cited in *American Crewelwork*, 18.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁸⁶ *Literary Magazine and American Register*, III, May 1805. cited in Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741 - 1850* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957) 141. cited in *American Crewelwork*, 17.

how to sew is as deficient in her education as a man who cannot write," wrote Mrs. John Farrar (Eliza), in 1818, in *The Young Lady's Friend* — originally published anonymously by "A Lady." Eliza did not change her views in later life, writing in 1838: "Let her condition in life be what it may, she cannot be ignorant of the use of her needle." However, Eliza's love of her needle may have arisen as a welcome distraction from the limitations of her domestic sphere. She called needlework a:

truly feminine employment, a moral power which is useful to the sex. There is a soothing and sedative effect in needlework; it composes the nerves, and furnishes a corrective for many of the little irritations of domestic life.

Daily newspapers also advised women on womanhood. On November 28, 1827, the *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* published a "Code of Instructions for Ladies," which summarized society's expectations of its women in twelve easy points, including:

1. *Let every wife be persuaded that there are two ways of governing a family; the first is by the expression of that will which belongs to force; the second by the power of mildness. One is the power of the husband; the wife should never employ any other arms than gentleness.*
2. *Avoid contradicting your husband...*
5. *Command his attention by being always attentive to him.*
7. *When a man gives wrong counsel, never make him feel that he has done so...*
10. *Cherish neatness without luxury, and pleasure without excess; dress with taste, and particularly with modesty...¹⁸⁷*

In her editorial, "Advice to a Bride," in *The Lady's Book* (Godey's) for May 1832, Sarah Hale warned soon-to-be wives that "Your duty is submission....Your husband is, by the laws of God and of man, your superior, so not ever give him a cause to remind you of it."¹⁸⁸ Passivity seems to have been the order of the day, as this little verse suggests:

¹⁸⁷ *Plain and Fancy*, 195.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 288.

To Avoid many Troubles which others endure:
Keep within Compass and you Shall be Sure.
How blest the Maid whose bosom no headstrong passion knows,
Her days in Joy she Passes, her nights in soft repose.
A Virtuous Woman is a Crown to her Husband.

Mrs. Beeton prescribed genteel behaviour for the rising middle-class woman, who might not be properly instructed in the domestic arts, which included the supervision and training of servants, and knowing what constituted appropriate leisure activity:

25. AFTER THIS GENERAL SUPERINTENDENCE of her servants, the mistress, if a mother of a young family, may devote herself to the instruction of some of its younger members, or to the examination of their wardrobe ... Unless the means of the mistress be very circumscribed, and she be obliged to devote a great deal of her time to the making of her children's clothes, and other economical pursuits, it is right that she should give some time to the pleasures of literature, the innocent delights of the garden ...

27. AFTER LUNCHEON, MORNING CALLS AND VISITS may be made and received.

31. IN RECEIVING MORNING CALLS it should be added, however, that the occupations of drawing, music, or reading should be suspended on the entrance of morning visitors. If a lady, however, be engaged with light needlework, and none other is appropriate in the drawing room, it may not be, under some circumstances, inconsistent with good breeding to quietly continue it during conversation, particularly if the visit be protracted, or the visitors be gentlemen.

48. OF THE MANNER OF PASSING EVENINGS AT HOME, there is none pleasanter than in such recreative enjoyments as those which relax the mind from its severer duties, whilst they stimulate it with a gentle delight Light or fancy needlework often forms a portion of the evening's recreation for the ladies of the household, and this may be varied by an occasional game of chess and backgammon. It has been often remarked, too, that nothing is more delightful to the feminine members of a family, than the reading aloud of some good standard work or amusing publication.

2397. The responsible duties of upper nursemaid commence with the weaning of the child ... She washes, dresses and feeds it; ... and, even at this early age, many good qualities are required to do so in a satisfactory manner ... She ought also to be acquainted with

*the art of ironing and trimming little caps, and be handy with her needle.*¹⁸⁹

Appearances were of the utmost importance, and etiquette manuals also advised women to keep their needlework on hand, that they don't appear indolent to chance callers:

In receiving morning calls, it is unnecessary for a lady to lay aside any employment, not of an absorbing nature upon which she may happen to be engaged. Embroidery, crocheting or light needlework are perfectly in harmony with the requirements of the hour, and the lady looks much better employed than in absolute idleness.¹⁹⁰

Godey's mission statement anticipates the spheres of public versus private, or House (as in Parliament) versus home:

This, then, is our aim: to diffuse and make popular the simple but efficient lessons of home happiness and goodness. Much is in the power of the mothers and wives of our land to make happy families, thus insure a happy nation.¹⁹¹

The few diaries that I've looked at support the notion that Nova Scotian women were as informed by these perceptions of women as their American and English counterparts.

Anna Green Winslow quotes the pastor at her church, Mr. Beaton, at some length, suggesting that she was much impressed by his views on women and beauty:

*My dear young friends, you are pleased with beauty, & like to be tho't beautifully - but let me tell ye, you'l never be truly beautifully till you are like the King's daughter, all glorious within, all the ornaments you can put on while your souls are unholy make you the more like white sepulchres garnish'd without, but full of deformity within.*¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ *Book of Household Management*, 9, 10 - 11, and 17.

¹⁹⁰ *Etiquette Rules and Usages of the Best Society; Sports Pastimes Amusements* (Melbourne: People's Publishing Company, 1886, reprint. Promotional Reprint Company Ltd., 1995) 68.

¹⁹¹ *Godey's*, February 1864.

¹⁹² *Diary of Anna Green Winslow*, 4.

Rebecca Byles was well read, reading everything from *Pamela*, a popular novel of the day, to Terence's plays in French, Pope's *Homer*, and:

*the Duchess de Craie on the importance of the female Sex, a Lady of Quality's advice to her children, Dr. Gregory's Legacy to his Daughters, and Letters of advice to New married Women...The two first are I think worth reading. There are a good many clever things amidst a great many trite Observations, and useless disquisitions. Dr. Gregory is beautiful; short comprehensive and delicate. The thousand little decorums, and niceties of a female Character it appears all most impossible for a Man to comprehend ...*¹⁹³

Anna Kearny's attachment to rules of etiquette read like a Jane Austen character; in 1802 Sydney she remarked to her diary: "To the surprise of the Company, Captain and Mrs Weeks chose to give public proofs of their Contempt 'of fix'd and settl'd rules' by being partners in the Dance, as well as for *Life* ..."194

Working Conditions

Before improvements were made in heating and lighting, women's needlework would have been circumscribed by home conditions. White-on-white work, or that which required fine stitching, would probably have been done during daylight, which meant that women without means would have had little time to spare for fancy needlework. As well, wealthier women would not have to budget their supply of candles, nor limit their evening fire to a single room, so would be more likely to engage in decorative, or parlour, embroidery in the evenings. Knitting required less visual concentration, so could be done by firelight. Still, it is likely that women suffered both eye-strain and permanent damage by working in poor light.

¹⁹³

Conrad et al, 55 - 65.

¹⁹⁴

Diary of Anna Kearny, 24 January 1802.

Women who did needlework for a living would be even more vulnerable to eye damage. Even under the best conditions, the strain on the eyes that needlework caused usually forced women to give up fancy sewing by age forty-five or fifty.¹⁹⁵ Older women would be more likely to spend their time knitting, as did Mary Smith, the grandmother who lived with her daughter's family in Cape Breton.¹⁹⁶ And as S. Annie Frost suggested, patchwork, "our first work and our last [needlework]," was considered ideal for elderly women, whose eyesight was weakened through years of demanding needlework.¹⁹⁷

The working conditions for women needleworkers in shops, and later factories, would be another interesting theme for interpretation. The author of *The Young Lady's Friend* suggested that young belles who loved their lace were probably blissfully ignorant as to the shop conditions where their fancies were made.¹⁹⁸

Technological innovations also affected women who sewed for a living. Few independent seamstresses (working from home) could have afforded a sewing machine when they were first introduced. This generated a movement towards factory work, which disrupted family life as women were forced to leave their homes. In the shoe industry in Lynn, Massachusetts, initially women were able to carry out their work (binding leather uppers) while taking care of their children at home. But by mid-century, working-class women were confined to factories for long hours.

¹⁹⁵ *Plain and Fancy*, 124.

¹⁹⁶ *Diary of Mary Elizabeth Wood Smith*.

¹⁹⁷ *Shep*.

¹⁹⁸ Susan Strasser, *Never Done* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982) 137.

Democratization of Needlework

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, technological innovations made fancy needlework and fashionable clothing patterns accessible to greater numbers of women. Until then, silk embroideries, samplers, and fine muslin work had been the indulgence of affluent women and their daughters — materials were expensive and skills were learned through costly lessons. Berlin patterns brought canvas work within the reach of less wealthy women; patterns ranged in cost from a few pennies for a bookmark, to large, full-colour patterns for firescreens or framed pictures, which cost several dollars.¹⁹⁹

Women who sewed their own clothing would have based their patterns on extant garments, while more affluent women could afford to pay a seamstress to create up-to-date fashions. Ladies books and magazines provided greater access to fashion plates, as well as sewing and needlework patterns and instructions. And at the end of the nineteenth century, mass production of patterns and decorative trims, such as machine-made lace and braid, made updating garments more affordable and easier to accomplish at home.

Decorative needlework required a certain body of leisure-time, which initially limited fancy work to wealthy women. With the rise of the middle class in the nineteenth century, and the concurrent increase of access to domestic servants, more women had more time to spend in leisure activity. The expansion of public education also helped to liberate women from domestic responsibilities. Naturally, their many and varied duties continued to dominate women's daily lives, but the increased discretionary time allowed them the possibility of putting energy into decorative, rather than simply functional work.

¹⁹⁹

Vincent, 46.

Technological Changes

According to the *New York Tribune* at the end of the 1850's:

*the needle will soon be consigned to oblivion, like the (spinning) wheel, and the loom, and the knitting needles...People will have more work done, will dress better, change oftener, and altogether grow better looking...The more work can be done, the cheaper it can be done by means of machines - the greater will be the demand. Men and women will disdain the soupcon of a nice worn garment, and gradually we shall become a nation without spot or blemish.*²⁰⁰

By the end of the nineteenth century, machinery threatened existence of hand sewing and embroidery.²⁰¹

Needlework Tools and Supplies

A thimble was a prized possession, and needles and pins were expensive luxuries that cost the equivalent of five to ten cents each. It was no wonder they were kept in special cases. A pincushion pre-stuck with pins made a welcome present. Most needlewomen used some form of stretching frame or hoop for embroidery.²⁰²

Linen was called by various names, including Holland, kentings, cambric and lawn, and fustian. In the United States, linen grounds were commonly used for samplers. Fustian was used for English crewel embroidery. Cotton fabric came into use as a ground cloth, replacing linen-and-cotton blends, and all-linen grounds. Dimity, both all-cotton and cotton-and-linen blend was another popular ground. Some finer samplers used muslin grounds.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Strasser, 114.

²⁰¹ Vincent, 49.

²⁰² *American Crewelwork*, 31 - 32.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 84 and Bath, 125 and 201.

Today, fine woolen yarns are sold as Medici yarns. Most eighteenth-century crewel work used a comparable weight to present-day crewel yarns for embroidery.²⁰⁴ In colonial America, crewels could be purchased in various grades. Women who lived in port cities could buy threads put up in skeins, while other women made their threads themselves.²⁰⁵

Textile dyes initially were made of indigo, sumac, woodwax (Maine), vegetable and mineral matter. Cochneal, indigo, and logwood dyes were more expensive as they had to be imported, while saffron, herbs, and planta genesta could be harvested locally. The colour range of natural dyes was dominated by browns, blues, and yellows. Dyeing manuals with recipes first appeared in America in 1798. One such book was published by Evert Duyckinck and Elijah Bemiss: *In Conformity with an Act of the Encouragement of Learning* (1815)

Home dyeing declined after 1857, when the first of William Henry Perkin's aniline dyes were produced.²⁰⁶ The muted shades produced by vegetable dyes gave way to a palette of hard, vibrant colours, which could produce rather jarring results. Colours went in and out of fashion; in the 1850s and 60s, pastel shades were popular, while a decade later Prussian blue was the rage. Colours became darker in the 1880s — wines, maroons, olive green, browns, and greys dominated canvas work.²⁰⁷

The predominant embroidery stitches in the eighteenth century included tent, cross, counted satin, and line stitches. Plain cross-stitch, satin stitch and queen (rococo) were also popular. Couching, french knot, stem, satin, split,

²⁰⁴ *American Crewelwork*, 85.
²⁰⁵ Bath, 122.
²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 33 -34, 200, and 210.
²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 210.

back, rope, chain, and buttonhole stitches were more technical stitches used in fancy work.²⁰⁸

Before 1830, most American needlewomen used regular crewel or silk yarns, sometimes combined with beads, to work Berlin patterns. After 1830, softer, angora-like, merino yarns became popular.²⁰⁹ Berlin wool was made of merino, whose soft, silky fibers easily absorbed dye. Wool dyed in Berlin was sold under the Zephyr label. By the 1830s, merino threads had superseded crewels in American embroidery. Silk threads were also used in Berlin work for grounding and accents.²¹⁰

Initially, Berlin was worked on plain woven cloth, usually linen, using fine silk or wool thread. Berlin canvas was available in black, wine, and white in four mesh sizes with 21, 29, 34 or 40 threads per inch. Berlin canvas was very evenly woven, and appropriate for bead, chenille, and silk work. It was also very expensive.²¹¹

Berlin work became so popular that canvas manufacturers adapted their products for it, using a white, yellow, or blue thread every tenth space on the cotton canvas, to make it easier to count squares and transfer the pattern design more quickly. Another canvas innovation, developed in the mid-nineteenth century was 'Penelope.' This canvas had doubled warp and weft threads, which allowed the needleworker to separate the paired threads, and thereby fashion a doubly fine mesh, as well as helping to prevent the heavier wool-thread stitches from distorting the ground.²¹² Mesh sizes were not standardized, but the most popular canvases had ten to twenty threads per inch. The canvas was stretched in a frame, and

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 201.

²⁰⁹ *Plain and Fancy*, 206.

²¹⁰ Bath, 209.

²¹¹ Ibid., 207.

²¹² *Plain and Fancy*, 205.

threads weren't knotted, but simply worked back into completed sections of the needlework.²¹³

In 1847, Mrs. Henry Owen's *Illuminated Book of Needlework* contained thirty-two canvas stitches. The stitch now called Florentine or flame, is listed by Mrs. Owen as the Berlin stitch. Plush stitch was used for high relief, and could be sheared for carved effects, but most articles were worked in tent, cross or Berlin (Florentine) stitch.²¹⁴

Perforated cardboard became an inexpensive and popular ground for Berlin work, and was done with woolen or silk thread.

In the United States, Berlin patterns began to appear in periodicals in 1856, and continued to be popular until the 1870's. By 1890, Berlin patterns had all but disappeared. *Godey's*, *Peterson's* and *Harper's Bazaar* all published Berlin patterns, sometimes the same ones. In 1870, *Peterson's* was publishing one coloured pattern a month.²¹⁵

Nova Scotian Diaries and Needlework Tools and Supplies

Anna Green Winslow wrote her mother to thank her for sending broad cloth, bags, ribbon, and hat. She learned to spin flax to make linen for sewing shifts. Anna was living in Massachusetts just prior to the American War of Independence, and she observed the patriotic practice of buying only goods manufactured in the colonies, instead of British imports:

Feb.21, 1772 last Thursday I purchas'd with my Aunt Deming's leave, a very beautiful white feather hat, that is, the outside, which is a bit of white holland with the feathers sew'd on in a most curious

²¹³ Bath, 208.

²¹⁴ Bath, 211.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 209.

*manner white & unsullied as the falling snow, this hat I have long been saving my money to procure for which I have let your kind allowance, Papa...As I am (as we say) a daughter of liberty I chuse to wear as much of our own manufactory as possible.*²¹⁶

In a letter to Anna in 1779, once she'd returned to live with her parents (now also in Massachusetts), Aunt Deming thanked Anna for beads, wire, and bugles. These supplies were intended for a fancy headdress.

Rebecca Byles' diary makes mention of some of her sewing supplies, in reference to her state of confusion upon meeting with her future fiance: "my Thimble was lost, my Thread case met with the same fate."²¹⁷

Anna Kearny wrote of making a petticoat out of white taffeta, and giving some muslin net to her friend Charlotte for an infant's clothes. She bought dimity locally for under-petticoats.

Francois Lambert Bourneuf's diary records that the French prisoners of war received their textile supplies through the jailor, who also kept a shop where he sold thread. If a prisoner requested something he didn't have on hand, he would get it from town the next time he went. "For example, he brought more than five thousand pounds of wool a year, and he did not charge high prices."²¹⁸ Bourneuf initially had to unravel his own nightcap in order to learn to knit gloves.

Louisa Collins carded and spun her own wool, bringing it to a neighbour to be woven. Her father brings her muslin from Halifax, and she also received some silk for her pelisse.²¹⁹

Mary Ann Norris also picked and spun wool, and had her cloth woven locally. She writes of walking to Ritchie's to choose mourning, and going to the store to buy muslin. She mentions receiving a neat little work box from her sister, buying

²¹⁶ Diary of Anna Green Winslow, 31.

²¹⁷ Conrad et al, 57.

²¹⁸ *Diary of a Frenchman*, 38.

²¹⁹ *Louisa's Diary*.

an imitation paisley shawl in Kentville, and making her own candles and soap. Mary Ann also went around inquiring for feathers.²²⁰

Edward Ross's Halifax store sold cloth and sundries, but they still spun their own wool on the farm.

Margaret Dickie Michener's diary mentions her sister Ann buying patchwork patterns and black velvet for a bonnet. Margaret also picked wool, which she took to the mill (probably to be carded) and then spun herself.

In 1916, Bessie Hall made her Graduation Dress out of crepe du chine.

Mrs. Alexandra MacKenzie remembers her father bringing home pieces of hard wood and whittling them into knitting needles for her mother and herself.

A Southville resident recalls that big balls of cotton cost a couple of dollars, or ten to fifteen cents a yard.

Ralph Franklin Broome said that in 1910 they recycled flour bags, bleaching them and using them as aprons.

Olive Robbins of Owl's Head remembers her family carding wool for the batts used to make quilts.

Newspapers and Needlework Tools and Supplies

Newspaper advertisements are a good indication of what sewing supplies were available in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1785, the *Royal American Gazette* advertised tailors' trimmings, threads, glazed linen, and Best Whitechape

²²⁰ Diary of Mary Ann Norris.

needles.²²¹ The same year, the *Halifax Journal* offers “gown and cap trimmings ... Besides every other article in the Millinery Way.”²²² The needles advertised in the *Royal Gazette* were described as “milliners, London and best.”²²³ Later in 1790, pins were available for sale.²²⁴ In 1791, there are advertisements for indigo, imported from England.²²⁵

An 1812 edition of the *Halifax Weekly Chronicle* advertised threads, thimbles, bodkins, beads, thread cases, tambour needles and cases, and netting needles and marshes. They also offered indelible marking ink, and under the jewellery section they included plain and enameled thimbles, and crewel frames.²²⁶ Later that year they advertised indigo, fig blue, sewing twine, and pound & paper pins.²²⁷ In 1817, the *Acadia Recorder* advertised dye stuffs, pound & paper pins, needles, and silver thimbles. Edgings, twist threads, tapes, bobbins, and sampler canvas were also available.²²⁸ The *Weekly Chronicle* advertised “town and country pins,” and shoe thread.²²⁹

In 1838 the *Halifax Journal* advertised tapes, bobbins, laces, and cotton balls, buttons, and moulds.²³⁰ Ten years later, ready-made clothing and worked muslin collars were available, along with Tailors’ trimmings, buttons, and patchwork.²³¹ In 1848, the Halifax Dyehouse was advertising their skills at dyeing silk, cotton, and woollen garments. In the same paper, laces, sewing silks, crochet

²²¹ *Royal American Gazette*, 9 June 1785,
²²² *Halifax Journal*, 28 October 1785.
²²³ *Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 2 January 1790.
²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 17 August 1790.
²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 29 November 1791.
²²⁶ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 22 May 1812.
²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10 July 1812.
²²⁸ *Acadia Recorder*, 14 June 1817.
²²⁹ *Weekly Chronicle* [Halifax], 23 April 1819.
²³⁰ *Halifax Journal*, 9 April 1838.
²³¹ *Morning Chronicle*, 11 February 1847

colours, and ready-made clothes were on offer.²³² And in 1856, collars and sleeves, ribbons, dresses, dress materials, indigo, insertions, and stamped collars were advertised.²³³ Sewing machines were available in Halifax — at Boston prices — in 1854.²³⁴ In 1867, the “Weed” Sewing Machine was promoted as having the advantage of being serviced in Saint John, New Brunswick.²³⁵

Berlin Wools, Ladies’ Work Boxes and Reticules, ribbons, braids and trimmings were advertised in 1867,²³⁶ and again the following year, as well as fancy cotton braids.²³⁷

In Liverpool in 1871, needle cases, dress trimmings and ready-made clothing were all for sale.²³⁸ In Halifax, Clark’s Elephant Spool Cotton — suitable for sewing machines — was promoted. There were also yarns, slipper patterns, ready-made clothing and “Wheeler & Wilson” sewing machines available in 1877.²³⁹ An advertisement for “Oxford Homespun” informs us that manufacturers had been experiencing problems — whether machine or labour; in 1877 “mills are working again full time — prepared to execute orders in all shades at once.”²⁴⁰ And in April 1877, there were ball knitting-cottons and ready-made clothing available.²⁴¹ The *Lunenburg Progress* advertised trimmings, buttons, and ready-made clothing in 1894, and by the turn of the century, they were running advertisements for Butterick patterns.²⁴²

²³² Ibid., 12 September 1848.
²³³ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 17 May 1856.
²³⁴ *Halifax Journal*, 14 June 1854.
²³⁵ Ibid., 16 December 1867.
²³⁶ *Halifax Journal*, 15 April 1867.
²³⁷ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 2 July 1868.
²³⁸ *Liverpool Advertiser*, 8 June 1871.
²³⁹ *Morning Chronicle* [Halifax], 19 January 1877.
²⁴⁰ Ibid., 31 January 1877.
²⁴¹ Ibid., 21 April 1877.
²⁴² *Lunenburg Progress*, 28 March 1894.

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